

Calvinist Contact

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School boards asked to develop anti-racist policies

Robert VanderVennen

TORONTO, Ont.—The Ontario legislature will be requiring that all public school boards in the province spell out policies that promote equity for people from ethnic and racial minorities, Education Minister Marion Boyd has announced.

This action comes as part of the NDP government's anti-racism strategy. It is a response to a newly-released report prepared last year which surveys school policies on this subject. The survey showed that only 39 of Ontario's 124 school boards had a written policy in place on ethnic and racial equity.

Among reasons given by boards for not having a policy on racism are that all students are treated equally so there is no need, and that the board's "philosophy clearly states that each child will be treated in a Christian fashion."

'Value-oriented'

Racial and ethnocultural policies are different in kind from other sorts of school policies, says the survey report, because they are emotionally loaded and are value-oriented. They take a long time to develop; 18-24 months in the typical experience. Staff members responsible for these policies are often vulnerable and need support to reduce stress, adds the report. In-service training is seen as essential for all staff and trustees to develop and implement racial equity policies.

Community involvement is seen as necessary for the development of such policies. Consultation and public meetings in the community are often helpful, though sometimes public meetings turn hostile. Policies are sometimes stimulated by a serious racial incident in a school. Sometimes one or

two trustees will insist on policy development, often after attending a conference on the subject.

Boards often neglect the needs of aboriginal students, and indeed many boards without racial policies are in northern areas which do serve Native students. For these boards "ethnocultural" is taken to refer to immigrant families, not to first nations people. In some cases Native people feel their needs are ignored, especially when their children need to live away from home to obtain their schooling. French-speaking families also need more attention, says the report.

The Ontario Ministry of Education is pledging to help school boards, says Boyd, first of all by establishing policies for its own staff. It will also issue guidelines for policies and provide financial and staff resources for the development of ethnocultural and racial equity policies throughout the province.

Thinkbit:

If I tell my dog, "Come here," he runs right over with a "Yes, what can I do for you?" The cat's response is "Put it in writing and I'll get back to you."

Reader's Digest - May 1990

In this issue:

Marian Van Til reflects on fathers and her own father p. 6
Jan Johnson highlights the key to surviving rough times p. 10
Reformed and Anglican church leaders get to know each other's heritage p. 11



Celebrating fathers, June 16.

Photo: Hella Hammid

Chinese student in search of political model for China

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — Hong Kuan Jiang is not quite sure what kind of political and economic system his home country, China, should aim for, but he does believe that the present system will not do. The current leadership in China wants to decentralize that country's economic system but at the same time wants to keep the political system centralized.

"Economic and political reform go together," says the 35-year-old York University student. "You cannot change the economic system without changing the political system." In fact, the student uprisings of 1989 were a response partly to the contradictions between government efforts to free up the market while holding tight the reins of power.

Jiang came to Canada in 1988, a year before the Tiananmen Square massacre took place, to pursue a doctoral program in political science. He has been a student of Western society ever since he has started attending the Foreign Affairs College in Beijing.

What's going on?

In 1966, when Jiang was 10 years old and the Cultural Revolution took place in his country, he was told that the capitalistic system exploited the working class, that profits were the main goal and that exploitation led to corruption of morals. In order to build an ideal society one would have to overthrow such a system.

Ten years later, when present leader Deng Xiao Ping assumed power and opened up the country to Western influence, Jiang and his fellow students became doubtful about the claims the previous regime had been making about its own system as well as about the capitalist system.

"We wanted to know the truth," says Jiang. "What's really going on? It was almost a hundred years after the death of Marx and almost 60 years after the Russian Revolution. Even our government admitted that the 10 years of the Cultural Revolution had been a disaster. Some parts of the system needed fundamental change."

Gradual reform

Jiang was not part of the student movement, which was operational mainly in Beijing. But he agrees with the students that in addition to the four modernizations which the government has announced — in science, agriculture, industry and defence — there should be a fifth modernization — democratization.

At the same time Jiang is no radical reformer. He believes that change should come gradually in China, because it is such a huge country with a population of over one billion. To introduce unemployment as a way of getting into a free enterprise economy, for example, might be disastrous as China has no social insurance network to catch the unemployed.

China is even more underdeveloped than most Eastern European countries, he says. The per capita income is around \$300 (in Taiwan, where the non-

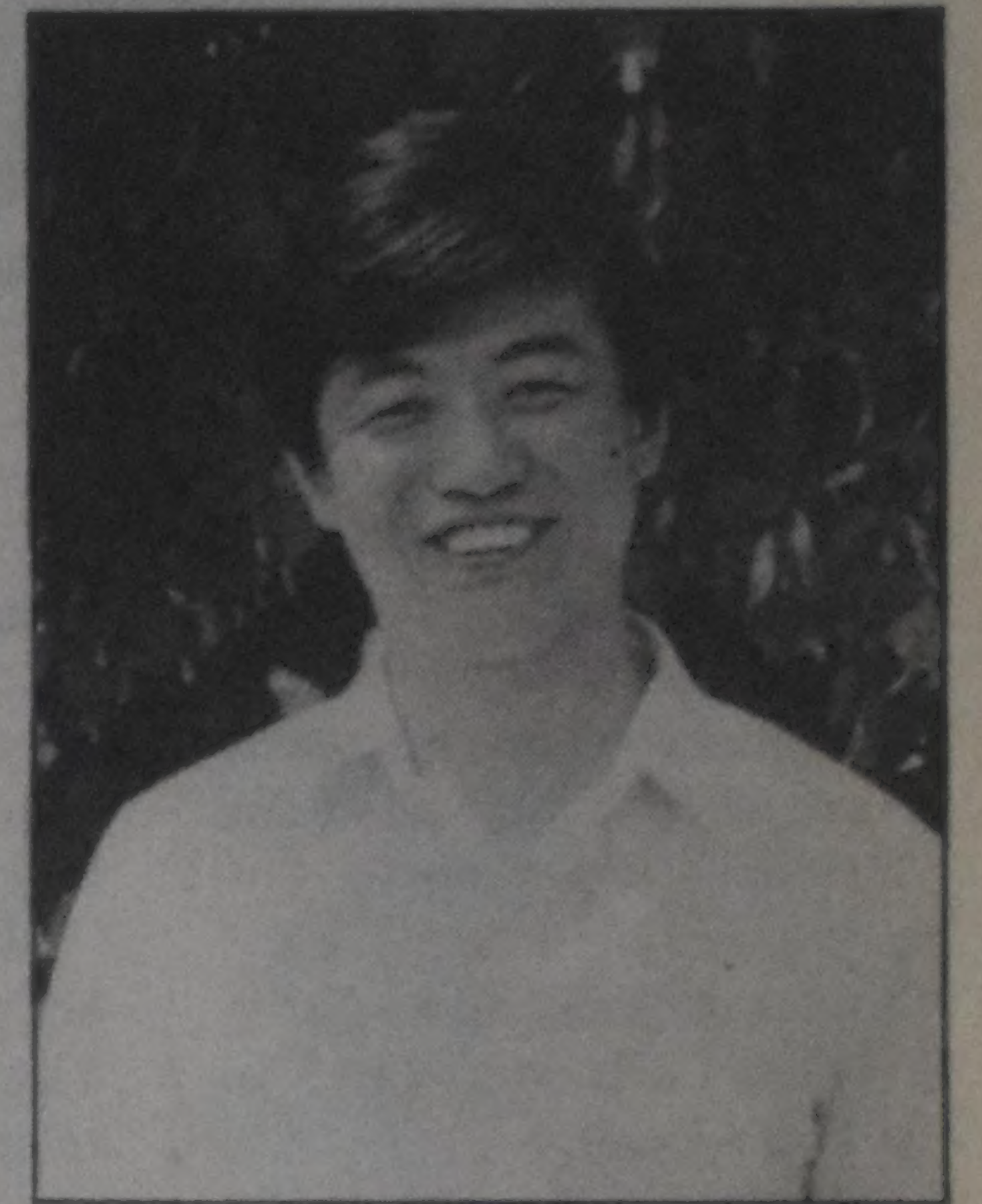


Photo: Bert Witvoet

Hong Kuan Jiang

Communist Chinese have settled, the PCI is \$4,325.)

No existing model

"I have no idea what model is suitable for China," says Jiang. "China should have its own system — a system that fits its cultural and historical development. The economy should be labour-intensive for quite a while."

Jiang looks at the Eastern European experiment as an important indicator for China. "I have not been convinced that present changes in Eastern Europe are the decisive changes towards democratization," he says, "except for East Germany which is being absorbed into West Germany."

Jiang believes that democratization should be one of the goals of his society, but "democracy" has too many meanings for such a statement to be all that helpful. "What is needed are checks and balances — some kind of accountability."

Should China have a multi-party system? Jiang does not see that as a realistic option. "No party can compete with the Communist Party," he says. Besides, without the Communist Party there would be a political vacuum which might mean violence and instability in China at this time."

Better to forget?

The economic situation in China is becoming hopeful, says Jiang. While most countries in the world are experiencing economic stagnation, China's GNP growth is more than six per cent. Also, there is political stability.

Jiang thinks that most Chinese people want to forget about the Tiananmen Square massacre. His comment may be supported by a recent news report that students at Beijing University found it necessary to urge people not to forget the Tiananmen Square massacre on its second anniversary on June 4.

Jiang thinks that both the government and the students have many lessons to learn. He sympathized with the students, but he did not see how all their demands could have been met. "At the beginning of the confrontation there were several choices, but later the choices narrowed down to the government resigning or the government using military force to suppress the uprising," he says.

(See also "Chinese scholar," p. 2)

Chinese scholar questions relations between Christianity and Western society



Meeting at York University. From l. to r.: Hong Kuan Jiang, Wybe Bylsma and Harry Kits.

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Bert Witvoet

TORONTO — One matter that interests Chinese Student Hong Kuan Jiang as he studies Western political and economic systems at York University is the connection between Christianity and Western society.

Jiang does not profess to know all that much about Christianity, but he has read some parts of the Bible and learned about Christian attitudes in a world history course. He has also had a few conversations with Christians.

"I think there are some contradictions between Western society and Christian attitudes," says Jiang in a quiet tone that does not want to offend. "There are many norms in Christianity which call on people to respect each other. There should be a kind of community or commonwealth in Western societies. The social structure in Western society is in contradiction to that."

Jiang is impressed with the way people are tolerant among themselves, but he doesn't know whether that is a Christian or a Western attitude.

For the rest he finds that Canada is a peaceful and stable country. "There are few outside interventions in people's lives, in contrast with my country. In China the government tries to manage everything. Here the people manage themselves." But he thinks that the Chinese prefer it that way. "They want strong leadership."

Culture and religion

Another part of his observations about Christianity is that Christianity can be separated more easily from Western culture because it has its own sphere. "Culture and religion cannot be separated in China," says Jiang. Confucian principles such as family relations, paternalistic order, a

moral life, etc., are all part of the cultural web. But there is no formal expression of Confucianism in religious structures.

Most young Chinese do not believe in God, according to Jiang. In Chinese society religion is not something that moves society forward. But he does acknowledge that the government has expressed concern about the growth of the Christian faith.

A societal crisis

Although he admits to a crisis of belief in his own life, that crisis has more to do with political and social belief. It came as a result of the lying and failures he and others encountered in official claims about political systems and about the infallibility of Mao Tse Tung. It was not a transcendental struggle for him with questions about the ultimate meaning of life. It was more, "What is the truth about all these claims made by various systems? How can we build a better society?"

Jiang was brought in contact with Harry Kits of Citizens for Public Justice through Wybe Bylsma, a businessman from Cobourg, Ont. who makes it a point to make contact with foreign students. Jiang expressed interest in learning more about a Christian view of politics. He has found that the Marxist professors at York (and there are a whole spate of them in the political science department) are more open to discussing other perspectives than the professors who represent the Western liberal tradition.

Jiang expects to return to China after four or five more years of doctoral work. He wants to teach at a university there and contribute to the orderly development of a more open society. His wife and eight-year-old daughter hope to visit him in Canada this summer.

'Politics' is harder than making political demands

In the first segment of a TV program, a group of civil libertarians defended an almost absolute right to publish freely. They were aghast at any suggestion that there should not be a paperback version of Salman Rushdie's *The Satanic Verses*. They felt that, although the book pained many Muslims very deeply, this fact could not be a reason to censor free expression. They demanded that the government removed all barriers to the book's free publication and wide circulation. They called this their political position.

In the second segment there were relatives and friends of hostages being held in Lebanon. They felt that the government was not doing enough to secure the hostages' release — that it was too afraid of losing face and of giving up too much. Why had the French been able to make much better headway with their hostages? The relatives felt that the government should not stand on pride or abstract principle but be willing to negotiate to obtain the captives' release. They called this their political position.

The producer had a rare brainstorm, or perhaps an insight into what is really involved in politics. In any case, the third segment of the show brought the two groups — the civil libertarians and the hostage supporters — together in the same discussion.

The interviewer then asked the hard question (i.e., the *political* question): "If the terms of the release of some hostages were the suppression of *The Satanic Verses*, would you agree to it?" (This is not a far-fetched suggestion; such a demand has been made.) "What if the hostages would be killed if the book were not withdrawn?"

Rare silence

This question produced a rare, for TV, silence. The civil libertarians hemmed and hawed. No one was willing to accept the death of a known person in order to further his or her cause (especially if that someone's spouse were sitting opposite). The relatives and friends were more forthright. "Yes," they said. "If that's a condition, meet it. Withdraw the book, and let us free real flesh and blood human beings."

The discussion continued, but in a wayward fashion. The diamond-hard moment had already come and gone: the moment when the question was no longer a demand (pressure from a group concerned with one thing), but become a real question, a *political* question. It was a question no longer of a single ideal, a single good, a single demand, a single assertion, but one of many ideals, many goods, many demands, many assertions — all being advanced at the same time, by different people and not all achievable at the same time.

This is the difference between politics and interest groups. It is the difference between politics and ideals, politics and demands. An interest group can push for one thing, regardless of how it affects others. Someone who holds to an ideal can push for it without

facing the other ideals that are raised.

Self-interest

Further, an interest group is not accountable or responsible to those whom it will or may hurt. It is responsible only to those who support it. Nobody else gets a say. Idealists don't have to deal with the populations that oppose them; they only have to say their ideal is right. The fact that 50 per cent of the population, or 90 per cent may radically disagree, is neither here nor there.

But politics, the governing of a country, must of necessity deal with many demands and ideals at the same time. It necessarily balances off even legitimate and proper demands.

Democratic politics means that decisions are accountable to, in principle, all the populations: Greenpeace and forestry workers, Albertans and Quebecers, Christian and non-Christians. All policies will be judged and held accountable by people, including people opposed to them.

This is why groups as diverse as Greenpeace, the Canadian Manufacturers Association, the Canadian Labour Congress, the National Action Committee on the Status of Women, the National Citizens' Coalition, the Anglican Church...are, in the political arena, interest groups and not really political groups. They cannot be held structurally accountable by those who disagree with them or by those whom their suggestions will hurt. Whether or not 80 per cent of the population agree or disagree with them is something they can safely ignore. They have to win such support.

Crucial input

Does this mean their activities are wrong? By no means. Such positions are crucial input into politics.

But they cannot substitute for politics, nor pretend to provide political answers. Only a political party which proposes, according to its principles, to harmonize all the legitimate interests in the country, and which intends to seek support from and be accountable to the population at large, is in a position and has the moral authority to make political decisions.

The standard for such decisions is, as the Bible says, *justice*. Not an ideal, not a blueprint, not an ultimate solution: but dealing honestly and fairly with the complex issues before us. Justice deals with many things at the same time. It can, in principle at least, be practised by a party or a government. But it cannot, in the nature of the case, be practised by a group that addresses only one side of an issue.

Paul Marshall is senior member in political theory at the Institute for Christian Studies, Toronto.



Paul Marshall

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MADRID VIENNA COPENHAGEN AMSTERDAM

All present and accounted for! The all-Canadian census took place on June 4. Statistics Canada will start counting for the next two years. It will take that long to compile all the information.

Monsieur keeps getting bad press, whatever he does. The trip to the Far East which, I am sure, was well-organized and established good economic initiatives, was spoiled by the slip of the tongue about Ontario's deficit budget. Monsieur is certainly creative in infuriating provincial premiers. Fortunately, Mr. Clark, the government's reconciler-in-residence, is able to patch up most of Monsieur's indiscretions. *La Presse*, though, was particularly hard on the prime minister. In an editorial it said: "We've known for a long time that Mulroney does not have Trudeau's class. Despite his efforts at trying to appear comfortable with world leaders, Mulroney at times looks like a peasant done up in his Sunday best." Ouch. He reminds me more of the sexton of my hometown church, and he was a real authority figure, let me tell you. Wore tails too, he did.

The Mohamed al-Mashat affair won't go away, either. Everybody is blaming everybody else for the fact that Mr. Mashat, the great Hussein defender, waltzed into Canada as if he was born in Rocky Mountain House. The opposition is pursuing the matter with seemingly boundless energy, like a vampire on the trail of blood, adding every day to the government's embarrassment. There are a lot of red faces in those committee hearings, yet the truth of the matter is not yet revealed. Somebody fairly high up must have shook the bushes.

The B.C. Social Credit government has run out of money, as all governments are apt to do from time to time. Not to worry though. A spending bill will be quickly drawn up (the stock boy can do it), and such a bill usually passes before most back benchers wake up. In Victoria, however, the NDP stalled a \$5.4 billion spending bill as long as it could. It took the government 14 hours before the coffers were filled again.

Hey! Why the big deal about a deficit, anyway? If Toronto's Skydome can run \$100,000 in the red every single day and survive, what's a couple of hundred of billion shortage for any government? How red is the valley of debt!

Yes, Monsieur pays the GST. His shoes and Mila's dresses are all GSTed. The only people personally exempt from the tax are the Governor-General and Natives on the reserves. The rest of us pay. And pay through

the nose and probably one or more other orifice, we do. A recent study showed middle-income Canadians to be among the heaviest tax-burdened people in the Western industrial nations. One of the mysterious intricacies of the GST prices four doughnuts at \$2.35, but six of them are regarded as "for home consumption" and sell for \$1.95.

Farmers, too, are taking it on the chin. Farm cash receipts fell by four per cent nationally in the first three months of 1991. Lower crop prices and fewer government support programs accounted for most of the decline.

Taxes on tobacco products have reached atmospheric heights, and one of the world's oldest professions, smuggling, is being taken up again by who knows how many in the land? Remember the story about the man who daily crossed the border with a wheelbarrow loaded down with straw? He drove the custom officers crazy. They took the tire off his wheelbarrow and examined it; they sent the straw to a laboratory to be analyzed; they X-rayed the frame of the thing; they strip-searched the man but they couldn't find a thing. After the man retired they asked him, "What *did* you smuggle, actually?" "Wheelbarrows," he said.

Mr. Constitution, Joe Clark, keeps knocking on the doors of the premiers trying to find some way out of our national dilemma. Mr. Clark consulted with Premier Bourassa and concluded that there was room for negotiation. Let's hope so. It's a bit like a marriage gone sour. All aunts, uncles, neighbours and grandparents are trying to patch things up, but there is precious little left to be patched up. Will a constitutional assembly formed by provincial legislative figures be the answer? Most Canadians think so, according to a recently held poll, but Mr. Clark himself does not agree. The government has not yet come up with any other concrete proposals. Ottawa is leaving the door open to the possibility of a national referendum. By the way, one needs an extra hour a day nowadays to keep up with the polls.

Life in Kingston has become a touch more confusing. As of June 3, McDonald's started to sell pizza here. Change all around I see!

The Tiananmen Square massacre was remembered around the world. Words and speeches! Yet Canadian exports in 1990 totalled \$1.65 billion, up from a \$1.4 billion in 1989. Amnesty International reports that many Chinese are being imprisoned for years at a time, sometimes simply for making dissident speeches.

Ready for a name change? The old U.S.S.R., Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is gone. In its stead has come the Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics. That Union of Soviet Sovereign Republics continues, however, to panhandle the West. Buddy, can you spare a couple of billion? There are plans afoot in Europe to include Russia in the next economic summit.

International labour unions continue to oppose the U.S.-Mexico-Canada free trade talks. The treaty is, however, as inevitable as an offering in a church service. It will come at one time or another. Labour intensive production will move more and more to low-wage Mexico.

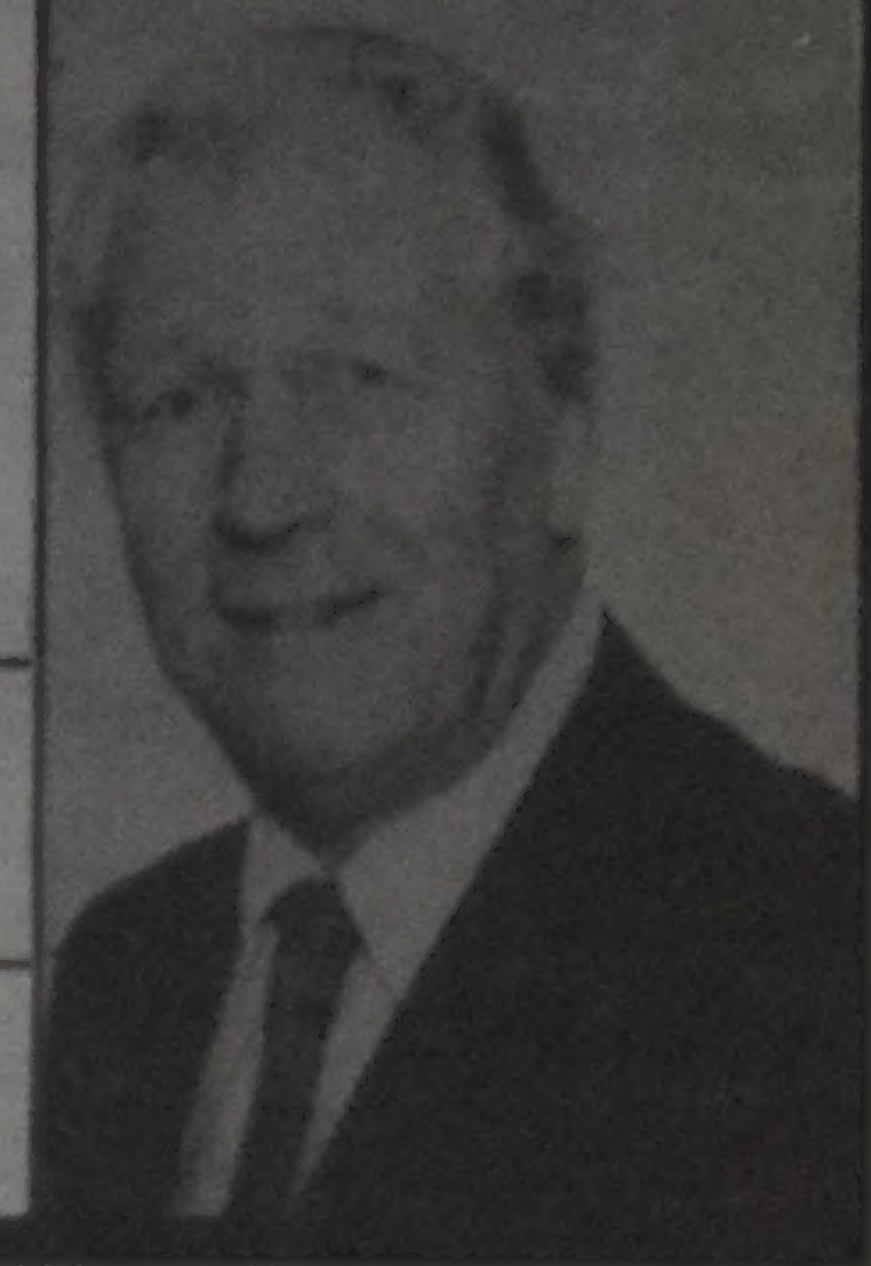
The Pope went home to Poland where anti-Semitism is still as thick as caribou blankets on a sleeping Eskimo. He donated a church building to the Ukrainians of the Orthodox rite.

Trouble spots of the world: the whole Middle East, Lithuania, South Korea, Yugoslavia, Ireland, Ethiopia and South Africa. Peace is taking a tentative hold in Angola. "The path to peace is never an easy one," President Bush said. Ain't that the truth? That statement applies universally. Peace is as hard to obtain internationally as it is nationally and even "where two or three are gathered." Bush wants to curb the spread of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. Who doesn't?

NATO is aiming at a leaner and probably meaner fighting army. There will be a 70,000-soldier, four division, mobile response force, and a whole bunch of stockpiled short-

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl



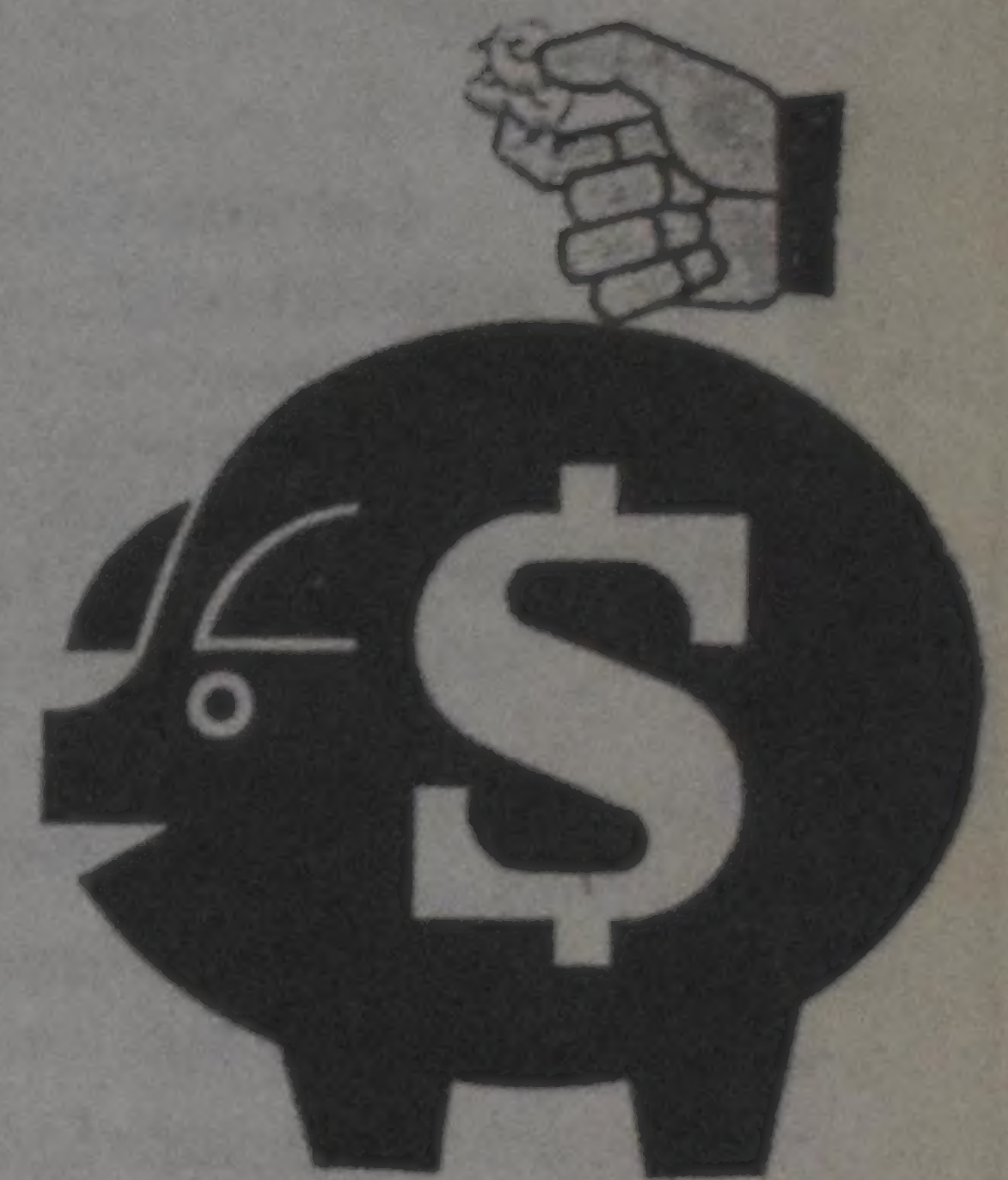
range nuclear weapons will be scrapped. What do they do? Bring them to some nuclear arms wrecker?

You will be happy to know that His Ex-Majesty Simeon of Bulgaria will be able to visit his native country for the first time since he was exiled 45 years ago. See the old home-stead, I guess.

Remember how your mother always told you to mind your Ps and Qs? *Calvinist Contact* now unveils the mystery behind the expression. The phrase dates back to the folklore of English taverns. Ps were for pints and Qs were the quarts. Minding your Ps and Qs meant watching the tab of the customers at the bar.

And according to Sondra Gotlieb, wife of the former Canadian ambassador to the U.S., Americans know Canada for its three Ms: Mounties, mountains and Molson's. Probably true!

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and a chaplaincy co-ordinator in Canada for the Christian Reformed Church.



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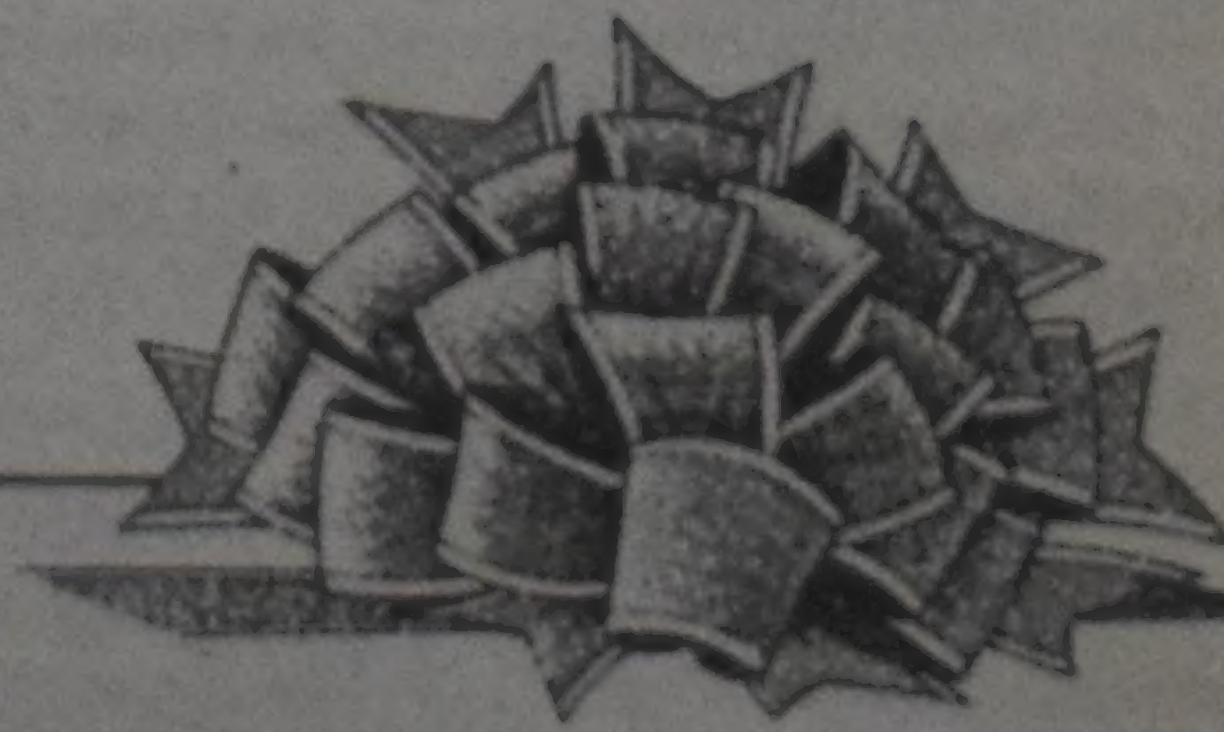


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A focus on sexual assault while roses are in bloom

As has been customary in recent years, the month of June has been declared Sexual Assault Prevention Month in Ontario by the province's Minister Responsible for Women's Issues. That there has been such a ministerial portfolio in Ontario since 1983 may surprise some people. That a whole month should be focused on violence against women may come as a shock. What is this society coming to?

Rather than lament the designations of a ministry and a month, we should lament the fact that there is a reality among us that makes these designations plausible and desirable. The ministry claims that one out of four women will become victims of sexual assault. (The ministry uses what it calls one of the more conservative studies done in Winnipeg in the early '80s.) The term "sexual assault" as used here includes a whole range of unwanted acts of a sexual nature perpetrated against girls and women, from kissing to fondling to intercourse. Many of these acts are committed in people's homes and many victims are assaulted by someone they know. This 25 percentile paints an outrageously demeaning and sad picture of human and domestic relations.

The slogan that the ministry has chosen for the month of June is "Against Our Will Is Against the Law." It tries to warn offenders and give some protection to women by pointing out that sexual assault is a crime against the state. When you assault your wife or rape your date you may end up in a court where it is her Majesty the Queen against you — the lout who could not restrain himself or who wanted to prove that he had power over a member of the opposite sex.

Whose body is it?

Maybe a question arises in your mind. Does a sexual act done by a husband to his wife against her will constitute sexual assault. The law says Yes. Many churches say No. Does the Bible also say No?

Perhaps someone feels inclined to quote 1 Corinthians 7:4a, which reads: "The wife's body does not belong to her alone but also to her husband." What about that text?

To begin with, this person has quoted only the first half of verse 4. The other half says, "In the same way, the husband's body does not belong to him alone but also to his wife." In other words, there is mutual ownership of each other's body. Not only that, it does not say that the wife or husband loses ownership over her or his own body, but in addition to the body

belonging to her or himself it *also* belongs to the other. So, it's *shared* and *mutual* ownership that the apostle Paul is talking about.

It does not require a lot of intelligence to know that shared and mutual ownership of anything works only if there are equal partners and these equal partners agree about what they want to do. In other words, 1 Corinthians 7 can never be used to allow a husband to force his will on his wife. Sexual gratification against the wishes of one's wife is sexual assault, and the sooner the church openly affirms that the closer it comes to reflecting the relationship between Christ and his bride, the Church.

I am not suggesting that only husbands can violate this kind of arrangement, though in reality husbands are both more psychologically inclined and physically able than wives to force sexual acts without consent. A wife may play games, be selfish or use sexual favours as a means of manipulating her husband. In both cases, though, it appears that the husband is often the one who has a stronger desire to engage in merely physical sexuality. This does not make him a greater lover, of course. In fact, owing to the influence of a sexually perverted culture, sexuality for the man especially easily degenerates into an exercise of lust and power rather than that it blossoms into an act of lovemaking.

A month of roses

Because our society has spoiled one of the finest gifts laid in the creation by a tenderly loving God, it has unfortunately been deemed necessary to declare the month of June Sexual Assault Prevention Month, when by rights our thoughts should be on Robert Burns' lines:

O, my Luve's like a red red rose
That's newly sprung in June:
O my Luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

Maybe *because* of the abundance of roses around us this month, we should support the Ontario ministry's focus on sexual violence.

One cannot expect a secular state to give a biblical rationale to back up an awareness campaign which helps to tell the truth about sexual assault. What one might perhaps have expected is a greater emphasis on the ethical and moral dimensions of violence against women. This dimension has so far been missing in Ontario's public documents. In the last three years, the Ontario Ministry has focused mainly on the fact that sexual assault is a crime.

Having said that, we hope that there will be pastors and priests in the churches brave enough to be God's mouthpiece at this time by denouncing domestic sexual acts done to women and girls against their will and against God's will. And we hope, too, that schools will see to it that the curriculum has a permanent unit on violence against women and children, that it encourages a frank discussion of the facts and places a lot of emphasis on just, chaste and respectful relations between men and women.

BW

Skillen calls for a fresh start in a troubled world

C.C. staff

EDMONTON, Alta. — Contrasting former Dutch prime minister Abraham Kuyper with today's cultural critic Christopher Lasch, James Skillen encouraged The King's College community to "start fresh in a broken world."

Skillen, executive director of the Association for Public Justice in Washington, D.C., spoke at the graduation of 46 college students, 32 of whom received BA degrees while 14 received the BSc degree.

Lasch, in a recent book, argues that modern secularized faith in progress is a failure, a situation which Kuyper predicted one hundred years ago. Skillen said that "with or

without God, Lasch seems to believe that we can find our moral guide in many different sorts of lower-class people simply because they have stood up to the progressivist illusion and have recognized some limits to human freedom."

Although Kuyper looked to common people for solid virtues on which to build a new way, he knew that the new heaven and new earth are God-given and would not come about largely through human efforts, as Skillen implies that Lasch believes. Skillen urged his listeners to be prisoners of Jesus Christ rather than a prisoner of their own illusions born out of pride and self-confidence.

—with file from Nancy Olthuis

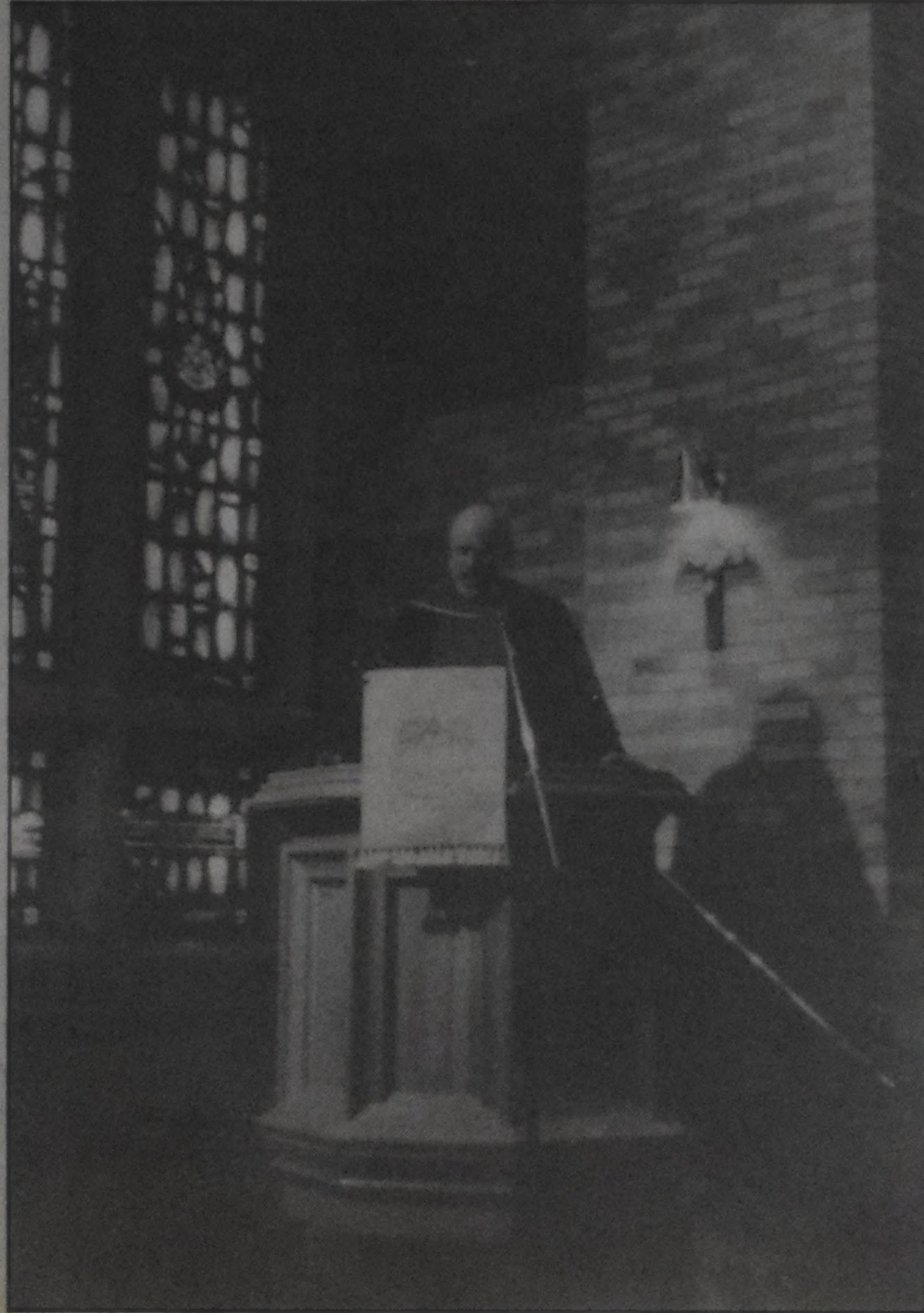


Photo: Nancy Olthuis
James Skillen urges creative steps to change the world.

*Send your questions to
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Confidentiality is assured.*

Letter

Editorial adds weight to task of parents

I have been receiving *Calvinist Contact* for a few years now although I cannot profess to be faithful reader. If Mr. Witvoet's editorial, "How does one counteract weightlessness of mind and soul?" (May 31, 1991), is an indication of the quality of the articles, then I have been doing myself a disservice in not spending more time with the paper.

My initial thought was of the "Me" generation. I meet many up-and-coming "bright stars" of the business world who have "everything going for them." Yet I cannot help feeling that

their lives are still empty, their existence sustained only by work and the "almighty dollar."

Many times I am tempted by their success, their drive, and their ambition — until I speak with them and find it so difficult to get behind their public face because there is a large void behind it. They may carry a lot of weight in their daily jobs but their lives seem to lack meaning beyond work. An excellent opportunity for evangelism? Probably; but in my weakness it is an opportunity lost.

Society seems to have lost the joy in the little things, like learning about rocks, and the importance of home and family. There is a lack of direction from our leaders in government and probably in our own positions as "leaders" in our families.

Mr. Witvoet perceptively identifies a root of our problem. Let us not be afraid to be parents to our children, to challenge them to think beyond the present in everything that they do. If our jobs are uninteresting, we must challenge ourselves in other ways to keep

ourselves stimulated in order that we may stimulate our children.

No, it does not take a PhD or an MBA to do this. Perhaps it takes the faith of a child to believe God can and will direct us and give us the weight we need. Thank you, Bert, for throwing a few kilograms our way.

J.M. Chorostecki
Brampton, Ont.

News digest

CAPE TOWN, South Africa — South Africa's white-led, racially separate parliament voted earlier this month to topple one of the last pillars of apartheid by repealing laws which have segregated suburbs and evicted about 3.5 million blacks from their land.

The Group Areas Act and the Land Acts of 1913 and 1936 were scrapped without opposition by coloured (mixed race) and Indian members of parliament in their own chambers and by 112 votes to 30 in a separate poll of white legislators.

"We rejoice with all those who feel the yoke of oppression being lifted," said Peter Soal of the anti-apartheid Democratic Party.

ADDIS ABABA, Ethiopia

The sudden departure May 21 from Ethiopia of long-time dictator Mengistu Haile Mariam brightens the prospects for peace in a country torn by 30 years of civil war.

"I think the chances are now better" that a settlement can be reached to end years of fighting, says Mogus Tekle Mikael, former spokesperson for the Ethiopian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Peace Talks among Eritrean and Tigrean rebels and the government began May 27 in London.

Despite the rebels' imminent approach, a surface calm has enveloped Addis Ababa. As recently as May 19, crowded churches and packed soccer matches were seen. The prolonged war has led to a decline in agricultural output, as many Ethiopians have fled their homes, because of the fighting and recurrent drought. In addition, Ethiopia suffers from lack of international donor assistance.

CANBERRA, Australia

A recent Royal Commission looking into the jail deaths of 99 Aborigines over a nine-year period has called into question Australia's treatment of aboriginal people.

Earlier this year, a delegation from the World Council of Churches described Australian attitudes toward Aborigines as "not just horrific, but genocidal."

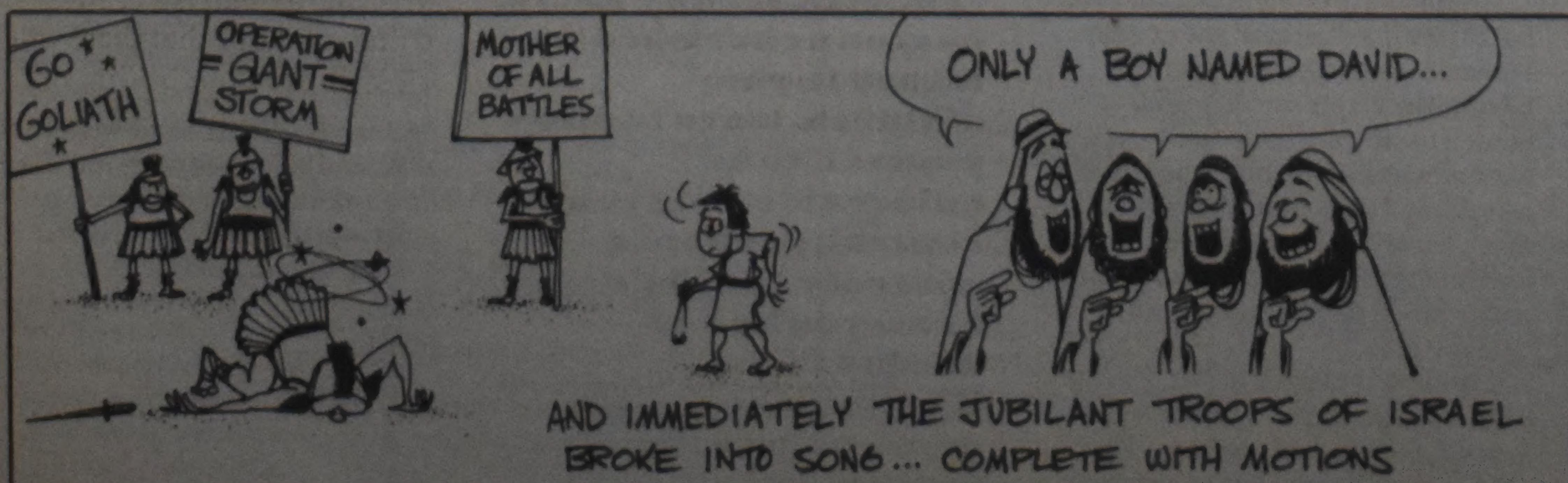
The 11-volume report issued May 9 is becoming a catalyst for a self-examination by the country.

The report, says Robert Tickner, Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, lays open "the harshness and oppression experienced by so many contemporary aboriginal Australians."

The Royal Commission, which worked on the report for four years at a cost of A\$30 million (U.S.\$23 million), made 339 recommendations to eliminate racist attitudes and practices.

With files from the Toronto Star.

BEYOND BELIEF



How important are fathers?

Marian Van Til

When we were collecting material for this issue of *Calvinist Contact* it quickly became apparent that we were missing something we had planned to include: items related to Father's Day. A month ago, after all, we observed Mother's Day through several short articles and poems in which the authors celebrated their own mothers' "motherhood." In the process, those authors reminded us that mothers are human beings and are therefore not perfect — but that they are cherished despite that.

The simple fact is, however, that we have received no submissions about fathers and fatherhood. We do receive such material once in a while, but not often; and when it comes, it's likely to be as a son or daughter looks back on memories of their recently deceased father.

Without getting into all the sociological ramifications (which I am not equipped to explain), I don't think one has to look too far to come up with reasons why fathers seem to take a back seat to mothers in the lives of their sons and daughters.

What first comes to mind is that most of us who are 20 or older were primarily raised by our mothers. She was likely the focal point of our family existence (and often of our faith life as well, the Reformed emphasis on the male-as-the-head-of-the-house notwithstanding).

I dare say also that though our fathers may have had a significant effect on our lives in a variety of ways (as mine did), most of us have probably developed a greater *emotional* attachment to our mothers: she was the one to whom we were close, who understood us; she was there to bind our wounds; she told the bully to go home; she *listened* to our stories, our fears, our dreams, while our fathers worked — and continued "working" at church committee or consistory or school board meetings.

Fathers too busy

If you grew up when that familial style was the norm, you may well have gotten the idea that motherhood is more important than fatherhood — the only acceptable occupation for a married woman — and that it's certainly more demanding and requires more direct action than being a father. Yet, ironically, fathers in that setting could (and did) control, or appear to control, both their wives and children through sheer words and will.

Fatherhood, until rather recently, seems to have been relegated to something a man did in addition to his work, if he had time. (Have you ever heard a man talk about having to stay home to "babysit" his own children, as if he's been hired for the evening? I have. But I've never heard a woman put it in those terms when her husband is out and she's taking care of their children.) I'm not assuming fathers necessarily wanted to be uninvolved in active fatherhood, but that was reality for many — and for their children.

Society has changed and is changing, and for many two-parent families, child-rearing is now much more a shared responsibility, as it should be.

It's a great irony, I think, that in the Reformed community where we have emphasized family so much and where men were to be responsible for directing their families' spiritual lives, that fatherhood, in practice, has gotten short shrift.

Any family therapist will tell you that both sons and daughters (but especially sons) need fathers to whom they can feel close and with whom they can talk — and not just about sports or the weather.

Learning intimacy

If a father is emotionally open, inviting communication and intimacy, he's doing his sons, particularly, a great favour. If such a pattern is established, when or if such a man's son decides to marry, the woman he marries will be most fortunate.

That's because the most universal marriage problem, from a woman's point of view, is the husbands' inability to communicate on a fundamental level — to delve into who she is, what she wants, how she thinks, what her world looks like; in short, to *intimately know* her.

Fathers, if you want to pass on a cherished legacy to your children, learn to allow yourself to be vulnerable, to give up control, perhaps a control you didn't know you had or needed.

If you do that, the greatest heritage of all — faith — will also be handed down in a profound and moving way, and your children will love and honour you for it. But if they can't see in you gentle lovingkindness and compassion, and respect for their mother, and an example of *servanthood* (that seemingly most feminine of Christian virtues) and if they can't talk to you about themselves and how they see the world, there's little chance they'll share either their faith or themselves with you. Faith, after all, must be communicated in a context, and personally.

The result may be that they'll reject, either outright or inwardly, that faith that you think you've imparted to them — and perhaps you along with it.

Enduring legacy, cherished memories

Are fathers important? Of course they are. My own father heads the list of men who have profoundly affected my life. But as for many men, fatherhood wasn't an easy road for him. Consequently, nor was "daughterhood" for me.

He was an extremely principled man, but came off as "all head and no heart." He hated small talk and (or perhaps because) he simply couldn't open himself to others. That is, until years of battling with his two sons (who rejected his faith and didn't return in his lifetime), his wife's terminal illness, and his own failing health — hard lessons, all — taught him to be vulnerable, both to God and to us.

I, being the youngest of five, was the biggest beneficiary of that ever-so-gradual move toward openness. That change opened both his life and mine, and gave me many valued memories. In

ROOFTOP MUSINGS/ALYCE OOSTERHUIS



The albatross

In the last months, the statement "The road to hell is paved with good intentions" has been adapted in our family setting to read: "The road to hell is littered with dissertations undergoing revisions."

For what seems like an eternity, we have watched husband and father Tom working behind the computer day and night to refine a word, a phrase, a symbol, a paragraph, to cohere succinctly with the thesis arguments. Long weekends of camping holidays have been shortened to minimize the time away from the computer; evenings have been prolonged to maximize study time. At this point, one may well wonder why any person, any family, would wish to put itself through the arduous task of writing a dissertation which few will read and even fewer will remember.

When we moved to Amsterdam in 1967 to study at the Free University we joined a group of eager Calvin College graduates who dared to proclaim that after a few years they would be finished with their studies so they would be able to take up Kingdom work in Canada. Initially, our proclamations were met with some derision by those who had been at the VU since 1958 or '59 or '60; after a number of years we joined those who derided new arrivals when they made the same bold statements. We made a virtue out of arguing that study does not prepare for life; to study is to live and to be involved. Almost 25 years later I cast about to place the names of those who were with us in those years and realize that many of them are still in the Netherlands, teaching, preaching, working, with the desire for a completed dissertation becoming tightly cobwebbed in the recesses of their minds.

Weighed down

So why would anyone wish to disturb the encrusted webs of the past to weave a work that seems never to be done? Because for some, until it is done, that which is incomplete hangs like an albatross around their necks. As with Coleridge's ancient mariner, the albatross of beginning with hope and cheer eventually becomes an albatross of burdensome inactivity, helplessness, and rationalizations for limited productivity. The phrase "If only..." becomes the stockpile of all unrealized ideals and the one who justifies his or her shortcomings with these words is as much aware of its defensiveness as the listener is.

"If only..." does not primarily apply to those who live out unfulfilled academic ideals. We use it whenever we try to explain why it is that we do not live out the ideals or the dreams of our youth. "If only my parents had encouraged me more..." "If only I had not been abused..." "If only there had been greater tolerance in my church..." "If only there had been a caring community." The "if only" excuses disable us and prevent us from taking initiative and responsibility, no less than the actual situations which crippled our development or confidence. To live defensively is to live behind a mask of fearful non-acceptance of self and one's past.

To overcome the "if onlies" in our lives requires substituting goals for dreams, the attainable for the illusionary, the lived for "what might have been," the phrase: "When I..." for the "If only..." Another chapter rolls off the printer and our family breathes a sigh of relief. The spell of the albatross has been broken. When do revisions end?

Alyce Horzelenberg Oosterhuis is assistant professor of educational psychology at The King's College in Edmonton.

"Fathers, if you want to pass on a cherished legacy to your children, learn to allow yourself to be vulnerable, to give up control, perhaps a control you didn't know you had or needed."

the last four years of his life, which we spent together, I still a teenager, I saw the range and depth of my father's personality, his *humanness*. I

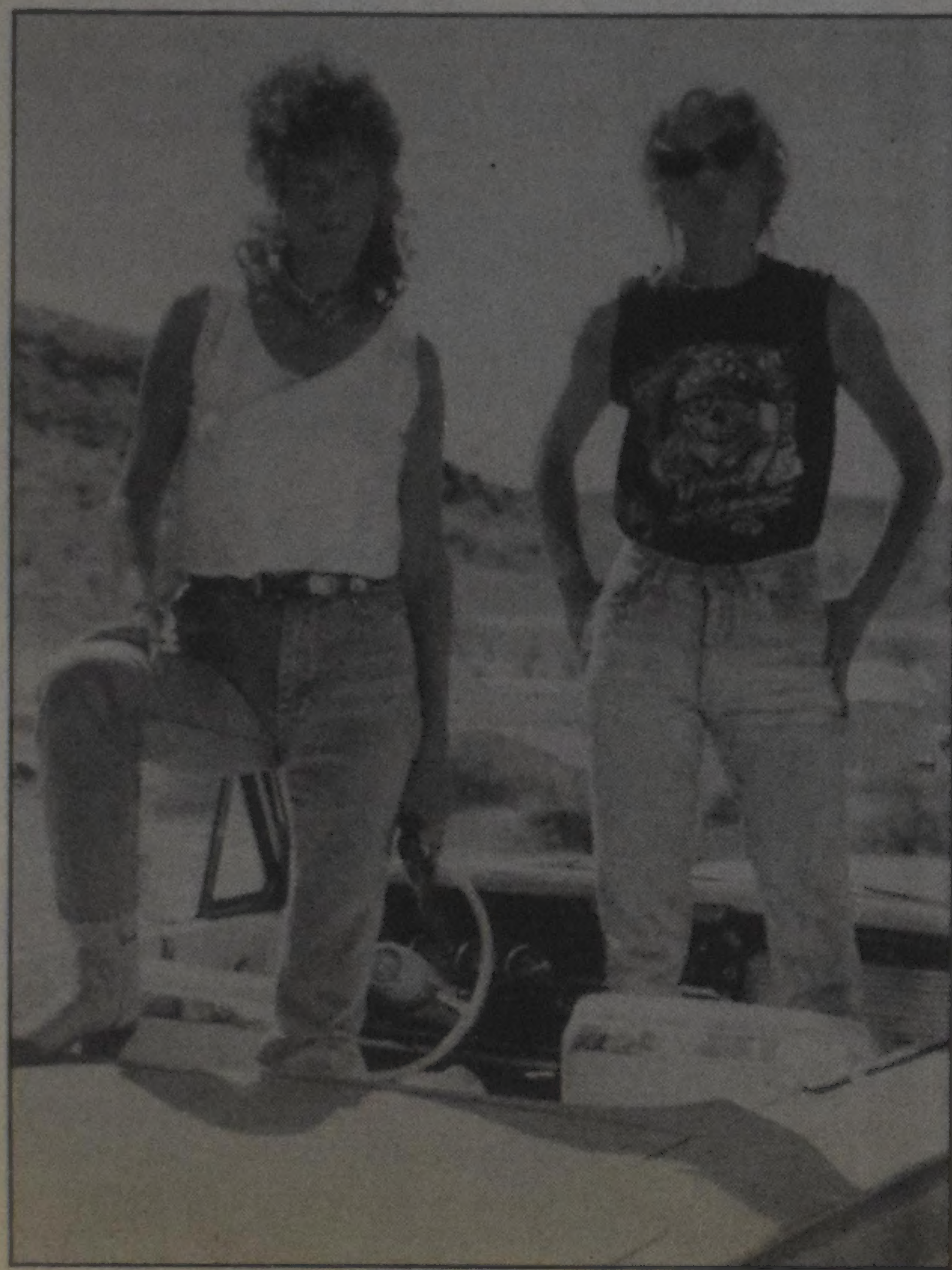
discovered that he did have a sense of humour; that he was sometimes as scared as I was. He could admit that he didn't have all the answers; we both reluctantly agreed that we were much alike; and he learned to say, albeit still a little awkwardly, that he loved me. And I, nervous too, could reciprocate.

If my husband and I were to have a son we'd name him William — after my father.

Cinnema summaries

Marian Van Til

Thelma and Louise



the two friends plan to spend a weekend there as a break from routine. The first night out while at a bar, Thelma drinks too much Wild Turkey and is friendly to a man who interprets her talkativeness and willingness to dance with him as sexual encouragement. When he attempts to rape Thelma in the parking lot, he is stopped by Louise with a handgun to his neck. But he is unrepentant and continues his rape verbally. After he makes a particularly vulgar and contemptuous remark, Louise, in a momentary blind rage, shoots him.

When the women realize the man's dead, they panic. They drive away from the scene, deciding as they go what they should do. Thelma's first instinct is to explain to the police what happened. Louise counters with the sobering fact that they will never be believed. "We don't live in that kind of world," she sadly tells Thelma. "All kinds of people saw you dancing with him. They'll think you 'asked for it.'"

Strangely free

And so they head west. And as they drive into the vast semi-desert and the hours tick by, a metamorphosis takes place. Ironically, as they become more and more hunted they begin to feel and act more and more free. Thelma comes unfettered for the first time in her life, doing things she's never dreamed of or thought she was capable of. Level-headed Louise at first almost comes unglued when Thelma successfully holds up a convenience store using the same lines given to her by the juvenile-delinquent hitchhiker they had picked up. But then something seems to snap in Louise as it

already has in Thelma. The film's shocking but strangely appropriate ending allows the women to decide their own fate.

There have been countless films with similar plots with men as the fugitives. Such films have been hugely popular (they've been called "road pictures," outlaw stories or male bonding movies). But some male viewers seem to be finding it jolting to see women portrayed as they are here: strong, quick-thinking, hard-driving, funny, vulgar — and *uncontrollable*. Those are contradictory qualities, not all positive, and none of them traditionally *feminine* qualities.

I suspect it is the lack of control that makes such viewers uncomfortable: see what happens when women break away from domination? The result is anarchy; and it emasculates men.

Others will likely find this is both a sad and exhilarating film. The sorry mess these previously "normal," lower-middle class women (they are anything but feminists) get themselves into comes about as a result of sexual violence against which they can't defend themselves in any lawful way. And that's not only sad, but frightening.

Fighting violence with violence

This is the second film to be released in two months which deals with women reacting in violent desperation against a man who has committed violence against them (see review of *Mortal Thoughts*, C.C. May 10). Needless to say, abuse of women is a deeply imbedded cancer in our society (and in our churches) which we

have barely begun to confront, let alone cure.

Such a story, then, will likely be cathartic for any woman who has experienced such abuse. This film, whose screenplay was written by a woman, *understands* women on a fundamental level in a way that few Hollywood films do. The ups and downs of their friendship ring absolutely true; and so does the white-hot rage that caused them to go over the edge of civility in the first place. Most films, even when they do focus on women (which they still don't do very often), present those women through men's eyes. So this film's understanding and resulting honesty is exhilarating from a woman's point of view.

But *Thelma and Louise* have no way out. Their options are jail or death, it seems. There's no redemption here for anybody; not for the women, nor for the male characters who are mostly lewd rednecks. (One police investigator played by Harvey Keitel is compassionate and realizes that the women are not hard-hearted criminals.) Thelma and Louise are victims of a certain kind of man, but they are also their own victims. They can't trust themselves or anyone else enough to face their crimes, and society generally winks at those who perpetrate crimes against women like them. It's perhaps not surprising that for them God is not in sight, either.

In the end, while containing very funny moments, *Thelma and Louise* is not a pretty picture. It's an all-too-clear presentation of the agony, fear and loneliness that distorted gender relationships have been causing ever since the Fall.

Rated R
Stars Susan Sarandon, Geena Davis, Harvey Keitel, Michael Madsen, Brad Pitt, Christopher McDonald
Written by Callie Khouri; directed by Ridley Scott

Thelma and Louise have been best friends for a long time. The innocent and open Thelma (Geena Davis) is a small-town Arkansas wife who spends her days at home

whether she wants to or not because her callous, abusive husband, Darryl (Christopher McDonald), says she must. Louise (Susan Sarandon) is a coffee shop waitress who is world-wise and weary and trying to revitalize a failing relationship with her boyfriend, Jimmy (Michael Madsen). When Louise gets access to a co-worker's mountain cabin,

Black singers slighted by Gospel Music Association

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — Marvin Winans of the singing group The Winans was an outspoken critic of the Gospel Music Association's (GMA)

decision to drop a black gospel concert from GMA week, and of what some say is a failure by GMA to respond to the needs of the black gospel industry.

"What most upsets me is that they consider their music as 'Christian,' and ours as 'black Christian,' but God is a Spirit; there is no black and white," Winans said. "However, there is a definite plan to keep division there. They toss in a few tokens, but the division is

done purposely." Winans urged blacks to stop attending GMA as a protest. "Change will come when blacks

recognize their power and their worth in the gospel music industry," he told *CCM Update* newsletter.

Hard to do Christian comedy

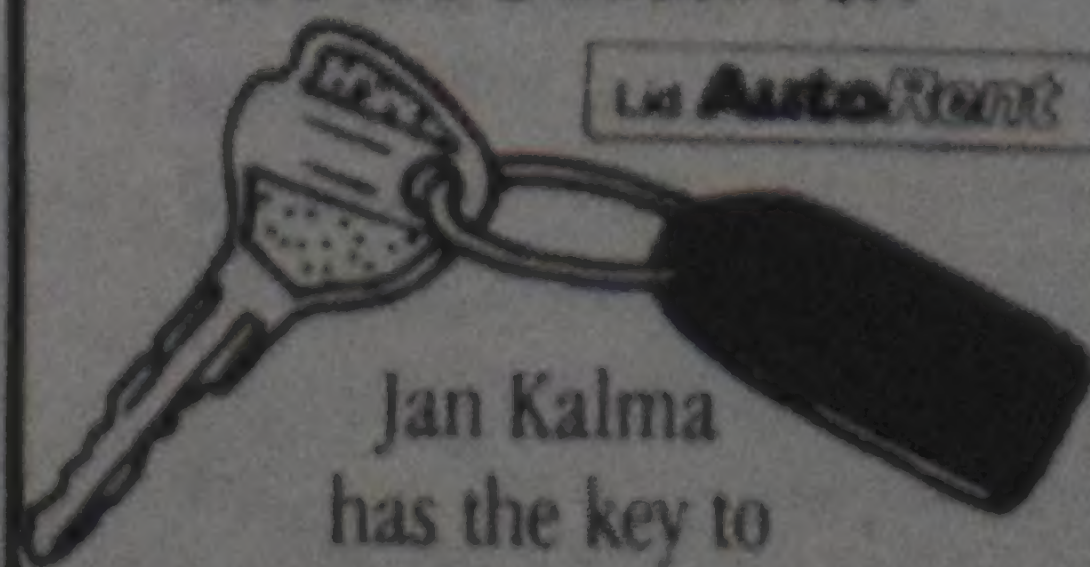
LUBBOCK, Tex. (EP) — Christian comedian Mike Warnke says he and his colleagues have to work harder than their secular counterparts. "Doing clean humour is harder than doing filthy humour, because you can't rely on embarrassment to get a laugh," he told *CCM Magazine*. "What we do has to be funny in itself. It's much harder to be clean and funny. You don't have the shock element." Still, Warnke sees comedy as a vital Christian Ministry. "Christians often take themselves too seriously, and don't take the things of the Lord seriously enough," he explains. "Christian comedy

gives us a chance to look at ourselves and see that all of the things we're really twisted up about are not as serious as we think, and that getting back to the simplicity of the gospel is the really important thing."

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Church

Marian Van Til, page editor

Evangelist Billy Graham addresses Church of Scotland general assembly

EDINBURGH, Scotland (BGEA) — Evangelist Billy Graham addressed the general assembly of the Church of Scotland and challenged the 1,300 commissioners who packed the chambers that the church needs to take the lead as a centre of spiritual awakening and as a source of inspiration for the church worldwide.

"It is my prayer that God's Holy Spirit is going to touch this land once again," Graham said. "From this little country could come the beginnings of spiritual renewal and revival that the world so desperately

needs, and I believe longs for."

Graham reminded the distinguished audience that his ancestors on both sides came from Scotland and that he was reared in the Presbyterian church — the U.S. counterpart to Scotland's state church.

Church in crisis

This was Graham's second address to the general assembly — a rare privilege for foreign clergy — following his first appearance during his historic crusade in Glasgow in 1955. This time, the general assembly welcomed Graham amid

alarming reports about the dramatic drop in church attendance and influence — down by one-third from his previous visit 30 years ago.

Graham again thanked the General Assembly for the support they have given to Scotland 1991 — a crusade held in three cities across Scotland in which over one-half of the area Church of Scotland churches were among the more than 1,200 participating.

At the conclusion of his address, the Moderator of the general assembly, the Right Reverend William McMillan,

commended Graham for the impact his ministry has had across Scotland and around the world.

Reflecting on his personal experience hearing Mr. Graham preach in 1955, the moderator said, "I can't remember what you said, but I have never forgotten the sincerity and simplicity with which you said it. I have marvelled ever since that people can be impervious to a simple message."

"Dr. Graham, you have touched many lives and through you Jesus has been

seen and heard," he continued. "That is a marvelous thing to happen in anyone's life and, as you said, it can happen to us all. It is our prayer that you go on being used in this way. You have the will of the general assembly. But, more than that, you have the blessing of Almighty God."

Bible translator killed in Sudan

NEW YORK, N.Y. (EP) — The United Bible Societies (UBS) General Office has confirmed the death of one of the main translators of the Moru Bible in Sudan.

Canon Ezra Lawiri was fatally wounded on Good Friday, March 29, when he was caught in the crossfire during a battle between government forces and the Sudanese People's Liberation Army (SPLA). Canon Lawiri, who had lived and worked through

two decades of war in the Sudan, took over the translation of the Bible into Moru in 1969, and had completed the draft of the whole Bible within the last year.

"I am shocked and saddened by the news," said Dr. Edward Hope, translation co-ordinator for the UBS Africa region.

"Ezra Lawiri was an extremely dedicated translator who had been working under very difficult circumstances for a long time. He will be especially missed by his people who respected him

as a spiritual leader."

One of Canon Lawiri's daughters was also wounded in the fighting and died from her injuries. They were being moved from their home village along with other villagers nearer to Juba, away from the fighting, when the escorting government troops were surprised by SPLA forces and a battle ensued. Archdeacon Bullen of the Episcopal Church of Sudan, who was with the group, reported that after

being shot Canon Lawiri said, "I am not dying, but going home to the Father." Then he asked the Archdeacon to sing the hymn "Rock of Ages."

Canon Lawiri had been forced to flee Sudan several times, often carrying translation drafts with him. He had finished the translation of the Bible into Moru, a language which is spoken by some 80,000 people in southern Sudan, and although some of the translation drafts were

destroyed or got lost in transit, thanks to his diligence in keeping and often having to hide copies of the work, the complete Moru Bible is now being put onto computer at the UBS regional center in Nairobi, in preparation for its production.

Soviet Bible publishers receive training in Manitoba through MCC

WINNIPEG, Man. — Two Soviet Bible and Christian book publishers received printing training in southern Manitoba in May through Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Canada.

Peter Derksen and Jakob Thiessen, both members of the Karaganda Mennonite Brethren Church, were brought to Manitoba by Mennonite Central Committee (MCC).

MCC arranged for the training sessions after sending \$30,000-worth of computer, printing and camera equipment to the church earlier this year. The equipment will help the church to take advantage of a new law which permits Soviet churches to produce Christian literature for the very first time.

"We used to only get Christian literature from

abroad," says Derksen, "but what we received did not quench the thirst. There must be much more for the people, and we want to produce it."

The church hopes to produce selected portions of the Bible, such as the gospels, as well as material about Mennonite

faith and basic Christianity.

"There is a great ignorance of what is in the Bible," Derksen says. "Since people did not have access to the Bible for a long time, there are a lot of misconceptions about what is actually in it."

They say that the most

popular Bible version in the Soviet Union is a children's Bible. "It's popular among adults because it is easy to understand," Thiessen explains.

Derksen and Thiessen hope to make their books and Bible portions available at low cost

or free. "We want everyone to have access to Christian literature," Derksen says, noting that while Bibles can be purchased in state-run bookstores, they cost 80 rubles — a quarter of an average monthly salary of 300-400 rubles.

U.S. Supreme Court upholds ban on abortion counselling funding

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Federal regulations that forbid the use of government funds for abortion counselling were upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court May 23.

Douglas Johnson, legislative director of the National Right to Life Committee, called the decision "a defeat for those organizations that demand tax dollars to promote abortion as a 'family-planning option.'" Johnson added, "Polls show that most Americans oppose the use of abortion as a means of birth control."

Johnson said that groups which decide to refuse federal funding rather than stop abortion counselling will be showing their true colours. "Any agency that refuses to accept tax dollars under the new rules proves that it is more committed to promoting abortion than to providing contraception," he said. "They will be replaced by agencies willing to stick to

contraception."

Under the regulations, the U.S.'s 4,500 federally-funded "family planning clinics" will be required to refer pregnant women for prenatal care, rather than for abortion. If asked about abortion, clinic workers are required to explain, "The project does not consider abortion as an appropriate method of family planning."

The opinion, authored by Chief Justice William Rehnquist, did not directly address the right to abortion. Instead, the court examined whether the rules interfered with the doctor-patient relationship or kept women from making informed medical decisions about abortion.

Government shouldn't have to pay

Rehnquist said the government is within its rights in deciding to spend money for family planning but not for

abortion. He cited a series of Supreme Court rulings dating to the early 1970s which hold that the government is not required to pay for abortions.

John Whitehead, president of Rutherford Institute, agreed. "As head of a civil liberties organization, I abhor censorship," he said. "But the federal regulations at issue in this case do not constitute censorship. The question was not whether doctors may advocate abortion as private persons. The question was whether they can use federal money to advocate abortion. The Court correctly answered no. Congress has the right to favour a policy of adoption over abortion, and that right includes the power to prohibit federal funding of pro-abortion speech. Pro-abortion doctors or clinic personnel can say whatever they want — as long as it is on their own time and their own nickel."

Planned Parenthood, the

nation's largest abortion provider, receives \$37 million of the \$150 million appropriated each year for the federal family planning program. Director Faye Wattleton said the organization's clinics will not withhold abortion information.

Pro-abortion groups are gearing up for a fight in Congress to overturn the rules. Congress imposed the restrictions during the Reagan years, and has since voted to ease them; last year President Bush vetoed three separate attempts to ease restrictions on abortion by counselling agencies which receive federal funds.

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Lutheran representatives speak about environment to Amoco shareholders

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — "We testify to our faith that teaches us that one God created us all and that we must be good stewards of all creation," Edgar G. Crane, director of the Lutheran Office for Corporate Social Responsibility, told officers and shareholders of the Amoco Corporation during the oil company's annual shareholders meeting, held April 28.

Crane spoke in support of a shareholder resolution that Amoco sign the Valdez Principles, which would make the company publicly accountable for its environmental practices. "We are not singling out Amoco for criticism," he said, noting that similar resolutions have been filed with 75 corporations, including many oil and chemical companies.

Shareholders rejected the resolution, with only 8.6 per cent of the shares voting for the proposal. Crane said this was a "victory," because a three per cent approval is needed to present the same proposal to Amoco's 1992 shareholders

meeting.

The Coalition for Environmentally Responsible Economies, a coalition of religious investors, New York City pension funds, labour unions, social investment leaders and environmentalists, introduced the resolution. The ELCA and the environmental network Friends of Earth, represented other coalition members at the meeting.

"We have sent proposals to 400 companies, with full information on how to be involved in the principles," Crane said. "There are 21 signatories at present — mostly small and medium-sized companies. We see the larger companies, however, being very responsive to the challenge. We think the Valdez Principles are causing the acceleration of corporate internal efforts to improve their environmental practices," he said.

The Valdez Principles call for corporate action in ten areas: protection of the biosphere, sustainable use of natural resources, reduction

and disposal of wastes, wise use of energy, risk reduction, marketing of safe products and services, damage compensation, disclosure of environmental hazards, environmental directors or managers, and environmental assessment and annual audits.

H. Lawrence Fuller, chairperson, president and chief executive officer of the Amoco Corp., told the shareholders that Amoco Chemical, Amoco Oil and Amoco Production had made advances in protecting the environment while remaining financially aggressive.

The ELCA owns shares in Amoco and other corporations through a variety of institutions. The church's Board of Pensions owns almost a billion dollars in stock and equities. Seminaries, colleges, social ministry organizations and some congregations are also a part of the ELCA shareholder network.

Poor give more than rich, according to new study

CHICAGO, Ill. (EP) — When Jesus praised the widow for giving her mite, yet scorned the larger gifts of wealthy donors, he was emphasizing the proportionately greater sacrifice represented by the small gift. That principle is still alive and well, according to a new study which found that, on average, poor people give more than twice as much of their income to their churches.

The study by Dr. Steven Hart, a sociologist, found that the poorest fifth of church members give an average of 3.4 per cent of their income, while the wealthiest fifth give only 1.6 per cent. On average, people in the lower income bracket gave \$200 per year, while those in the top income group gave a little over \$1,000.

Hart, who used information collected by the National Opinion Research Center at the University of Chicago, will present his findings at the annual meeting of the Society for Scientific Study of Religion.

His study of giving patterns in Christian denominations, sects and cults, found that Mormons are the most generous with donations, contributing an average of 7.1 per cent of their income to the church. At the bottom of his list were Christian Scientists and Unitarian-Universalists, who gave less than one per cent.

Evangelicals and fundamentalists came out ahead of mainline Protestants or Catholics,

according to the study. Among more generous donors were the members of the Assemblies of God, Seventh Day Adventist Church and Church of God.

Hart said his study raises questions of fairness, since charitable giving seems to act as a regressive tax. "It may be unfair...because [churches] get it from those least able to pay rather than from those who can most afford it."

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many books there is no end; and
much study is a weariness of the
flesh.
Reading, Da.5.
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p.p.ch.1.18.

Formed from the dust

Al Wolters

"The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground" (Gen. 2:7 NIV).

In the debate about origins it is sometimes said that these words of Scripture can be interpreted to mean that God made Adam out of non-human living beings. In this interpretation, "dust of the ground" is really a figurative way of referring to the animal stock out of which God caused Adam (or at least Adam's body) to be born. In this way, it is thought, an evolutionary account of human origins can be harmonized with the biblical account in Genesis. What are we to think of such an interpretation?

I would like to make two points about this attempt to harmonize the Bible and current scientific theory. The first is that this interpretation has found defenders among many thinkers who have a solid reputation for biblical orthodoxy. I think for example of B.B. Warfield, the great Reformed theologian of the late 19th and early 20th century, and of contemporary evangelical leaders like John Stott and James Houston. These are men who have devoted their lives to the defence of historic Christianity and who certainly cannot be accused of being liberal in their view of Scripture.

Extremely far-fetched

But my second point is that the interpretation which equates the "dust of the ground" with evolutionary forebears of the human race seems to me extremely far-fetched. There is just no good exegetical reason for reading the text in this way. Neither context, nor word usage, nor even the pun in the Hebrew (connecting *adam*, "man," with *adama*, "ground") suggests that the "dust of the ground" means anything but plain dirt. That also appears to be the understanding of the Apostle Paul, who writes that the first man was "of the earth, earthy" (1 Cor. 15:47).

I have a friend and colleague at a sister college (a man for whom I have the highest regard) who takes issue with me on this point. He argues that the Scriptures themselves suggest that "dust" may be equated with living beings. Doesn't God say to Adam in the very next chapter of Genesis: "You are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:19)? And isn't it common elsewhere in the Bible (for example, Gen. 18:27, Job 30:19, Ps. 103:14) to refer to humans as "dust"? Well then, if living beings are elsewhere equated with dust, why can't the "dust of the ground" in Gen. 2:7 be equated with living beings?

Tenor and vehicle

Although this may sound plausible at first sight, a little reflection will show that my friend's argument doesn't hold water. The prophet Isaiah says that "all flesh is grass" (Is. 40:6), but that doesn't mean that "grass" in other contexts may be understood to mean "flesh." I can say of pornographic literature that it is garbage, but that does not mean that garbage is pornographic literature. To put it technically, we may not confuse a metaphor's "tenor" with its "vehicle." Metaphorically, living beings can be called dust, but that doesn't make dust into living beings.

My point is not that we should never reconsider a traditional exegesis in the light of scientific findings, nor that there cannot be figurative elements in the Genesis creation story, nor yet that we should avoid all attempts at harmonizing the givens of Scripture and the givens of Creation. My point is simply this: let's not twist the plain meaning of Scripture in order to accommodate scientific theories, however well-established they may be. And, at the same time, let's recognize that Christians who espouse wildly improbable interpretations may well be pillars of orthodoxy on the fundamentals of the faith.

Al Wolters is associate professor of religion/theology and classical languages at Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont.

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Features

The key to surviving rough times

Jan Johnson

The people at church sympathized with us. My leg was broken, my husband was out of work and my two preschoolers were known for their, shall we say, inventive spirit of play. "How do you manage?" they asked.

"Better than I used to," I reported. "I ask God to help me get through each day — sometimes each hour."

I went on to share once in our home Bible study how I used to get into such a panic when things went wrong that I couldn't pray. Then when I did manage to pray, I challenged God, "If you really love me, please get me out of this jam."

Through several difficult circumstances in my life however, I was learning that instead of running away from God or playing games with him, I needed to release my frustrations to him.

Granted, God already knows what we are facing but it helps us to tell him, to pour our hearts out to him. We get it out of our systems and express our feelings to someone who cares.

Friends and family members obviously care too, and I still confide in them, but I'm learning that only God can provide the deep comfort that sometimes is so needed. I find myself revealing deep feelings to him I didn't even know I had.

Hannah an inspiration

One of the people who first inspired me to do this was the Old Testament woman Hannah, Samuel's mother. No matter how bad it got, she took her troubles to God.

Hannah was childless while her husband's other wife, Peninnah, had many sons and daughters. When Peninnah made fun of Hannah's predicament, Hannah took it hard, crying and refusing to eat (1 Sam. 1:5, 6).

Her well-intentioned husband Elkanah tried to comfort her by suggesting that being married to him should make up for her closed womb (1:8). His tender but irrelevant words did not help.

Hannah took her tears to the temple in Shiloh and promised God that she would give her child back to him if he would just give her a son (1:11). When the priest Eli mistook her fervency for a drunken stupor, she explained, "... I was pouring out my soul to the Lord" (1:15b). Her dedication must have touched Eli for he granted her request.

Grief release

Many of us would have allowed Peninnah's gibes, Elkanah's botched comfort and Eli's mistaken impression to get us down. Instead, Hannah prayed from the depth of her soul.

This type of praying opens the floodgates of our emotions. It allows us to

Depression: "Deep calls to deep in the roar of your waterfalls; all your waves and breakers have swept over me" (Psalm 42:7).

Revenge: "Let death take my enemies by surprise; let them go down alive to the grave, for evil finds lodging among them" (Psalm 55:15).

Doubt: "'Will the Lord reject us forever? Will he show his favour again? Has his unfailing love vanished forever? Has his promise failed for all time?'" (Psalm 77:7, 8).

These sentiments do not reflect the pearly white smile of the Christian whose facade is in place. This is a "man after God's own heart" laying himself bare before God (Acts 13:22).

Seeing through ourselves

By verbalizing these hidden feelings to God, we are able to examine ourselves and even laugh at our paranoia and self-pity. God helps us see through ourselves, to know when we're playing games. That element of self-discovery might explain why David's "depression Psalms" usually ended in confident praise to God.

This coming around to a place of praise keeps us from being irreverent. It's the railing without apologizing, complaining without thanking, stretching the facts without correcting ourselves that breeches our relationship with God. As we unloose our emotions we are responsible for staying honest and fair.

It takes practice to approach him this way. As we gripe and fume we have to tone down our exaggerations. We can't fool God for he sees things as they really are.

God's presence makes us more objective. "Poor me" sounds silly in light of his exemplary track record of taking care of us. In my own life he's brought me through my parents' divorce, a broken engagement and two miscarriages. He is a "friend who sticks closer than a brother" (Prov. 18:24).

Like David we rehearse in our minds the ways he has rescued us in the past. This thanking process is what brings us around to that place of praise. Then, in faith, we thank him for how he will rescue us out of our present dilemmas.

This is not to say that we demand answers. Rather, we pray because we don't have one and don't expect to for awhile. We may not know the answers but we know the Answerer.

These episodes leave us with a closeness to him much like we have after pouring out our hearts to friends. When we feel weak we look back to our conversations with him and draw on them for strength.

Instead of relying on our own fix-it systems, we open up to the spiritual side of things. Our problems aren't hopeless; we have the most powerful force in the universe working on them.

Jan Johnson is a professional writer who lives in Simi, California.

Reformed and Anglican talk together

A report on a recent Christian Reformed/Anglican dialogue

Harry Vriend

In three separate sessions over the last three years, members of the Christian Reformed Church's church relations committee in Canada have met with a similar committee from the Anglican Church in Canada. The expectations of these meetings were modest: namely, that we get to know each other better and that we profit from our discussions together. Two sessions were held on Anglican turf — St. John's Convent in Willowdale, Ont., and St. Michael's house in Oakville, Ont. — and one session was held at Redeemer College in Ancaster, Ont.

Members of the Anglican delegation were: Sister Benedetta, Canon Peter Gratton, Rev. David Guthrie, Rev. Victoria Matthew, Rev. Brian Prideaux, Rev. Brian Ruttan and Rev. Carol Skidmore. Members of the Christian Reformed delegation were: Rev. Jacob Binnema, Rev. Fred Heslinga, Kathryn Posthumus, Rev. Anthonie Vanden Ende, Dr. George Vander Velde, Rev. A. Van Eek, Aileen Van Ginkel, Rev. Harry Vriend and Martha Kouwenhoven.

The spirit of the meetings was friendly and frank. As a participant in all three sessions, I experienced acceptance and care from the brothers and sisters of the Anglican delegation. I'm sure that the other members of our delegation had the same experience. The fact that we included times of worship in our agendas fostered feelings of closeness as fellow members of the family of God. Along with the caring and sharing came frank and spirited discussions. We felt free to raise issues like abortion and funding for Christian education, and they felt free to question us on whether we were being too "separate" from the world, and whether we wanted uniformity in matters of doctrine.

Common views

Throughout these sessions, we discovered many areas of agreement. In a concluding session, Aileen VanGinkel led us in a facilitated discussion and this highlighted many points of agreement. We agreed, for example, that the Scriptures were the inspired Word of God; that the Divine Word comes through human media; and that the Scriptures must be understood in line with its chief content — of Jesus Christ crucified and risen for his people. We also agreed that the Good News goes beyond personal renewal in Christ and includes the redemption of all creation. God is at work in the world as well as in the church, and the church must remember that it is not an end in itself, and that all of its people are called to ministry in the world. The needs for evangelism and social action were expressed by members of both groups.

In spite of these agreements, differences between our churches and our approaches to things came out into the open and were freely discussed. By taking turns leading in worship, we experienced some liturgical differences in a first-hand way. We also have methods of church government that are quite dissimilar. Anglicans don't have elders, they have wardens; and we don't have bishops. Anglicans have had women as priests and in their other offices for years with little dissension concerning the matter, while we who are CRC have yet to resolve the matter.

Important differences

There were three specific areas where I sensed some

rather distinct differences.

One of them was in the role of the appointed leader in the church. In the Christian Reformed tradition, the pastor's function is chiefly prophetic, with the emphasis being on preaching and teaching. In the Anglican tradition there is more of an emphasis on the priestly role. Anglicans also place a greater emphasis on the sacraments. If, in our tradition, the sermon is the primary source of spiritual food, then I sensed that in the Anglican tradition the Eucharist is the primary way of being fed spiritually. The ordained leader then is an instrument of God in conferring grace to the people through the liturgy and the sacraments.

A second noticeable difference is how we see our relation to culture and society. Our Christian Reformed delegates spoke more often about the secular character of society and the need to transform culture and society so that we can serve the Lord in the world as well as in the church. I sensed that Anglicans are more accepting of Canadian culture than we are, and more content to work for change within some of the established structures. The Christian school movement was discussed and this brought the different points of view to the fore. Several of our Anglican brothers and sisters wondered whether we are being "isolationist" or taking a "counter-culture" position.

The role of Scripture

It was in the area of Scripture and its interpretation that the greatest divergence appeared. The official positions of our

respective churches do not differ all that much. In actual practice, the Anglican church allows for a greater range of viewpoints than we do, both in regard to Scripture and in regard to many current issues. We were told that Bishop Hooker's view (ca. 1600) about the three components of the interpretation of Scripture: namely Scripture, reason, and the tradition of the church, was still the predominant view, although within the church there are groups that lean in each of the three directions. This does cause conflict and it is at their synods that syntheses are attempted and decisions made in regard to current issues.

In the Reformed tradition, the emphasis is on *sola scriptura* (Scripture only). In the Anglican tradition there is more openness to the idea that the Holy Spirit works through the present-day church as well as through the Scriptures. Generally speaking, the Anglicans have a greater reluctance than we do about speaking of "unfaithfulness to Scripture and the confessions." They also feel less threatened by differing and conflicting positions on current issues than would be the case in our fellowship.

I found the challenge of communicating our Reformed ideas and perspectives to be a demanding one. The experience gave us a new understanding of both the Anglican tradition and our own. And through our shared discussions and worship, we experienced new dimensions in the communion of the saints.

Harry Vriend is pastor of Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Goderich, Ont.



Trinity Christian Reformed Church in Goderich, Ont. (Photo: Bob Vriend)



History

He sent the world touring

John McGowan

Tourism in Canada is worth over \$20 billion. By the year 2,000 it would be one of the most important single activities in the country. And it all began with an orphan boy's dislike of conditions in industrial England.

Thomas Cook had no education. Starting work at age 10 he tried being a printer, a carpenter and a gardener. He was upset by the terrible living conditions of people who had moved from farms and small villages to seek work in industrial towns.

By the year 1841 he lived in Leicester, a sombre place where people tried to banish their misery through drunkenness. Now a balding, 33-year-old Baptist missionary, Cook organized a train excursion to Loughborough so that a number of people could attend a temperance rally.

Breaking the vice grip

Trains had just come upon the British scene. Cook saw in them the opportunity to take people to the clean air of the countryside. He hoped that this would also break the grip that drink and tobacco had on them.

But it was a constant struggle. From 1841 to 1860 he teetered on the edge of bankruptcy. His wife ran temperance hotels. With the profits, he fought to keep the travel company running.

By 1851 he was working with his teenage son, John Mason Cook. They promoted trips to the Great Exhibition in London's Hyde Park. More than 160,000 people participated, staying in his London dormitories where he provided clean sheets, towels, soap and a hearty breakfast.

In 1863 Cook reached out to the Swiss Alps. Then another historic event proved a boon to his business. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 prompted Britons to travel to the far corners of their empire — to India and China, as well as the Pacific and the West Indies. Cook secured all of the business.

Travellers had a week's stay in Egypt while ships waited to get from Alexandria through the Suez. The enterprising travel agent chased their boredom by offering trips to the Holy Land, the pyramids and up the Nile.

Business was now booming. At one point Cook's owned

all the steamers on the Nile. His son ran market gardens along the river to ensure a fresh supply of vegetables. The steamers boasted all the comforts of home.

Greater ventures, improved conditions

The company's fame was spreading. It was called upon for greater ventures. Lord Dufferin, the British Viceroy of India, was appalled by the conditions under which Muslims made the journey to Mecca. Cook was asked to handle the travel arrangements for the pilgrims from India. John Mason Cook provided them with safe passage for the next eight years.

After that came the dramatic tour of the Holy Land by Kaiser Wilhelm II, emperor of Germany. He was trying to sweet-talk the Ottoman Empire and the Arabs into a deal.

By 1872 Thomas Cook led a trip around the world. This was the first of many global excursions. His vision and ambition, however, were somewhat overshadowed by his son's business acumen. John Mason Cook turned the company into an international corporate giant.

Offices were established around the world. Then in 1929 the company was sold to a European corporation.

World events again had an impact on the travel company. Winston Churchill needed its international network for the war effort. He prompted Britain's railways to buy the company back and to fund its operation.

Nationalization, along with the British rail system, followed. Then in 1872 Cook's moved back into the private sector.

Thomas Cook, the visionary Christian, would be proud of his efforts resulting in 1,500 offices scattered around the world, including 84 in Canada. The company bearing his name has assets worth more than \$2 billion and annual sales of over \$20 billion.

As the company celebrates its 150th anniversary a decade-long feud continues on whether Cook's or American Express started traveller's cheques.

Edmund Swinglehurst, chief archivist at Cook's London headquarters, contends that his company started in 1872 with a banking and exchange business, by issuing what were called "circular notes." Up to 1891

Thomas Cook, the visionary Christian, would be proud of efforts resulting in 1,500 offices scattered around the world, including 84 in Canada. The company bearing his name has assets worth more than \$2 billion and annual sales of over \$20 billion.

these pieces of paper could be cashed at any Cook hotels throughout the world.

John Mc Gowan is a freelance writer from Scarborough, Ont.

How Canadians got unemployment insurance

(Canadian Scene/Panorama) — "Hungry people make restless neighbours."

This was a lesson that reformer James S. Woodsworth, M.P., was trying to impress on Canadians.

In 1924, Woodsworth began to campaign in the House of Commons for home rule — as a prelude to social welfare reform. Constitutional realities at the time limited Parliament's power to implement social welfare measures.

Two years later he and a colleague, A.A. Heaps wrote to

Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King to ask "whether it is your intention to introduce at this session provision for the unemployed and old age pensions." King allowed old age pensions but replied that he would stick with the existing system of emergency relief for those out of work.

Then in 1929 the stock market crashed. While the Americans reacted with New Deal legislation to aid their unemployed, including an unemployment insurance law,

Canada was to suffer through the Great Depression with fewer social services than any other Western nation.

'Advantages' of poverty

But the Depression did breed a new attitude toward unemployment.

With so many people out of work, the unemployed could no longer be categorized as lazy and of bad character. Yet, under Prime Minister R.B. Bennett, the 1931 Speech from the Throne spoke of the

spiritual advantages of poverty. "We have no desire to undermine that high courage, that resourcefulness and ability of our citizens to emerge out of difficulties strengthened by trials as by fire," it said.

While Bennett saw a citizenry tempered by fire, Woodsworth had a different view. He warned: "Sometimes in the quiet hours I have heard the horses of revolt come galloping and galloping and galloping." Although the revolt occasionally flared into violence, on the whole it followed the path laid out by Woodsworth himself. Canadians looked to Parliament for solutions.

Eventually, Prime Minister Bennett put together his own "New Deal." It was a social reform program, including unemployment insurance. When King became prime minister again in 1935, he referred his predecessor's New

Deal statutes to the Supreme Court of Canada. The Supreme Court referred them to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in England. There they were declared *ultra vires* of the British North America Act. The Act would have to be amended, as Woodsworth had warned 11 years before. It was to be a long fight, first with the provinces and then with the Cabinet, before social reforms could be introduced in Canada. And unemployment insurance was to be the first.

In the meantime, one in four members of the Canadian industrial labour force was out of work. In the first months of the Second World War the armed forces and the war factories gradually absorbed the unemployed. But the Wartime Information Board reported that public opinion polls showed that people looked ahead to the post-war period with "something akin to dread." They wanted "great changes, a better world...fit for heroes."

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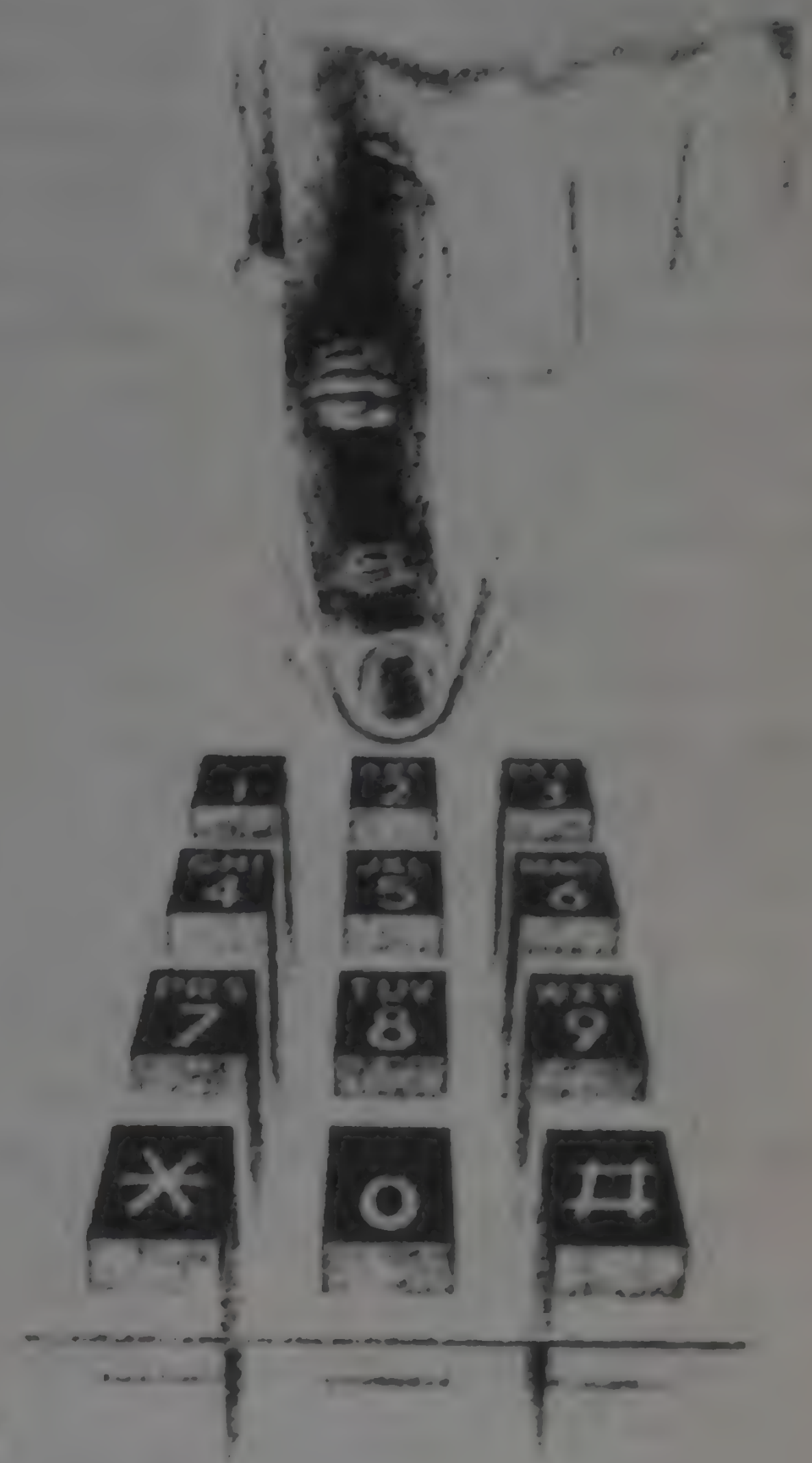
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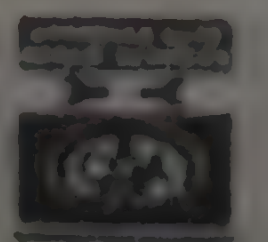
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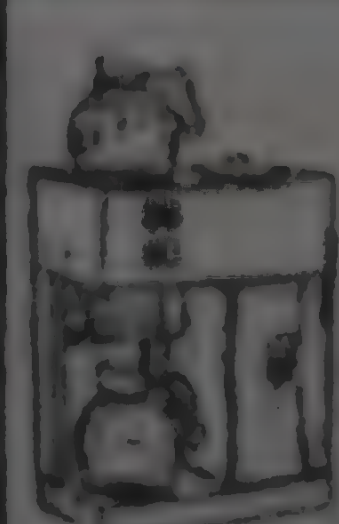
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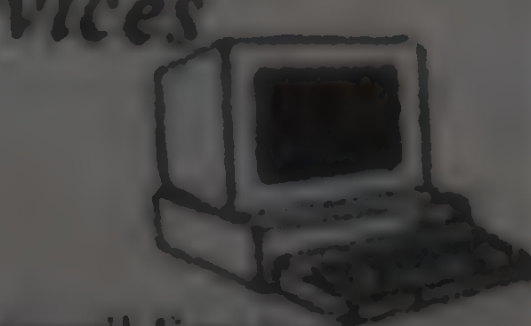
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News/views

Consultation calls for strategic response to Middle East ministry

Brian F. O'Connell

ATLANTA, Georgia (NNI) — Nearly 70 missions executives and staff gathered in Atlanta in early April to discuss and learn more about opportunities to meet immediate relief and development needs in the Middle East, as well as possible new ministry opportunities that have opened up as a result of the Persian Gulf War. The briefings were conducted by senior representatives from the religious community in the Middle East.

"We should attempt to build meaningful coalitions to meet the need," said Paul McKaughan, executive director of the Evangelical Fellowship of Missionary Agencies (EMFA), one of the main sponsors of the consultation. "We have to avoid the mistakes of duplication and advancing one's own agenda at the expense of the national church."

The consultation, which was organized with less than one month's notice due to the urgency of the issues, focused on co-operation between Western mission agencies and the Middle East, as well as among the Western missions themselves as essential to both short- and long-term success.

In the first informational briefings concerning the Middle East, religious liberty abuses were discussed quite candidly. A written report sent by Menes Abdul Noor, pastor of the Kasir Debara Evangelical Church in Cairo, Egypt, said, "International agencies should seek to speak out on behalf of the church and the persecution in co-ordination with Middle East churches."

Persecution needs to be exposed

One speaker who has spent many years ministering among Muslims and thus requested anonymity said, "The time is

now. We desperately need your help in publicizing the abuses of human rights and religious liberty. But it must be done in a massive dose."

Despite the history of conflict between Muslims and Christians, the information presented to attendees indicated unprecedented opportunities for proclaiming the gospel. It also stressed that the Christian community is growing. "No single event in the Middle East history has had an impact like the Gulf conflict," said one Islamic specialist. "The Middle East will never be the same." He also revealed that Arab Palestinians are converting to Christianity in greater numbers than ever before.

Not an unsolvable problem

Missions leaders were challenged to consider new models and strategies for ministry in the Middle East. Examples ranged from calling for Western agencies to utilize Christians in the region as their missionaries rather than sending in North Americans, to considering denominations adopt people outside their own theological traditions. Though some participants expressed skepticism that the proposals would work due to fund-raising problems associated with indirect missions involvement, others seemed less concerned about that.

"There is a new dynamic with regard to these kinds of approaches throughout the North American church community," said William Waldrop, executive director of the Association of Church Missionary Committees, which has several hundred member churches.

John Orme, executive director designate of the Inter-denominational Foreign Missions Association, said, "The only problem with the linking of expatriates and nationals in the Middle East with Western agencies is that many raise accountability and integrity questions. If those questions are answered and dealt with, there shouldn't be any problem with appropriating funds in that manner."

While there was much

discussion regarding a specific relief plan of action proposed by several agencies in the Middle East, the group did not adopt a formal co-ordination strategy. But the concept of coalition efforts, rather than unilateral action, was strongly promoted. "Buy into expertise through joint ventures with those already in the region," suggested McKaughan.

Greg Livingstone, general director of Frontiers, an agency which is believed to have the most missionaries in the Middle East, was encouraged by the conference. "For the first time that I can remember, I'm not frustrated," he said. "But we need to leave here with a covenant that we are going to follow through on networking with each other."

In response to his concerns, a small committee was established to co-ordinate follow through efforts.

The consultation concluded with a joint statement outlining the principles the agencies will

use to guide decisionmaking on ministry in the region. The document committed the participants to mobilizing prayer and relief resources, sharing information on the Middle East, promoting cross-

cultural missions efforts by Middle East Christians, and aggressively using their influences for the cause of human rights and religious liberty.

The joy of fatherhood

When the baby is in the womb it's got a real presence, not only in its movements, its kicking, but it also has a definite personality. You know instinctively that it's listening. It knows, with the wisdom of the ages, what's going on outside. You try and keep the family rows to a minimum.

I felt that my last daughter knew all the family long before she arrived. She probably knew the house layout, the labrador's bark, the doors opening and closing, music playing, the flushing toilet.

Once I read in *Time* that animals bond their young by breathing at the moment of birth on their offspring, a kind of quick snorting through the nose, giving them the smell.

On December 24, 1982, at 5 p.m., I carried out this experiment within seconds of my daughter being born. While nurses checked the baby's well-being, and Barbara checked its sex, I quickly, rather secretly, but determinedly, breathed my life on the baby. I do not practise favouritism with my children, but I know that my bonding with this child is absolute. I've been able to calm her when all else fails; she will sleep in my arms without panic or throwing about as babies are prone to do. The rewards and closeness seem to have justified the act.

— Bob Harvey



small talk

Alice Los

'Home-keeping hearts are happiest'

I like short vacations; that's probably because I like to come home again. But short vacations have other things in their favour. For one thing, there can be more of them in one year. There's less to pack and unpack and they fit between two mowings of the lawn.... Oh, and there's another bonus to the mini-trip: in keeping with the principle of its concept it should only take a three-hour drive or so to get where you're going.

My husband and I went on just such a holiday recently and early in the afternoon of Day 1 we found ourselves where we wanted to be. It was a small town, still struggling to wake up after its long winter slumber. There was a lake and there were mountains and, since we had crossed a border, there was also a slightly different atmosphere.

Before supper that evening we had walked the length and breadth of the town limits and felt at home. The motel manager was himself the tidy owner of this small operation and eagerly showed us to our room. Night fell over a perfectly quiet corner of the earth and sleep came easily. The weather was beautiful each day which helps on short and long vacations. All special attractions appeared to be under wraps yet, which did not particularly bother us because we tend to avoid those anyway.

One morning after breakfast we stumbled upon a cross-country ski trail right behind the restaurant and saw no reason not to follow it, albeit without skis. It proved to be a breathtaking exercise in more ways than one. The forest was thick and lush, the trail alternately steep and even and the only sound came from the wind, the birds and our own voices. At one point the trail took a sharp turn to the left

because of a lake which suddenly lay at our feet. A small waterfall tumbled into a stream somewhere. And all the while the red plastic arrows on the trees kept beckoning us along.

By the time we reached our car again the morning was well on its way to noon and we were one satisfying experience richer.

On the day we drove home it rained, which provided a special beauty to the trip. The dark ribbon of the quiet highway wound itself through long stretches of woods which were dressed in early summer greens. Under the overcast sky and freshly laundered by the rain, the vegetation took on a brilliance all its own and seemed to us like temples inviting the worship of their Maker.

Before long we found ourselves in the wide, flat country of the place where we live which, too, has its beauty. Five days' worth of mail is fun coming home to and a phone call to a daughter nearby assured us that all was well in the family.

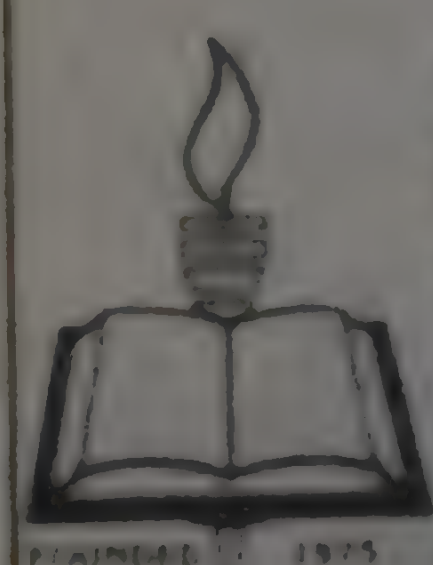
There was even new life at the place nearby. A long and eagerly expected foal had been born to one of the Arabian horses there. Not satisfied with just any name for the beautiful filly, the boys had called the Saudi Arabian embassy and politely asked for a translation of "Little girl." One of the clerks there gladly obliged and Tifla it is. And just as Tifla lies gracefully in the bend of her mother's body on the field, so is the memory of that short vacation and the joy of coming home again embedded in our memory.

Alice Los lives in Inkerman, Ont., where her home is her castle

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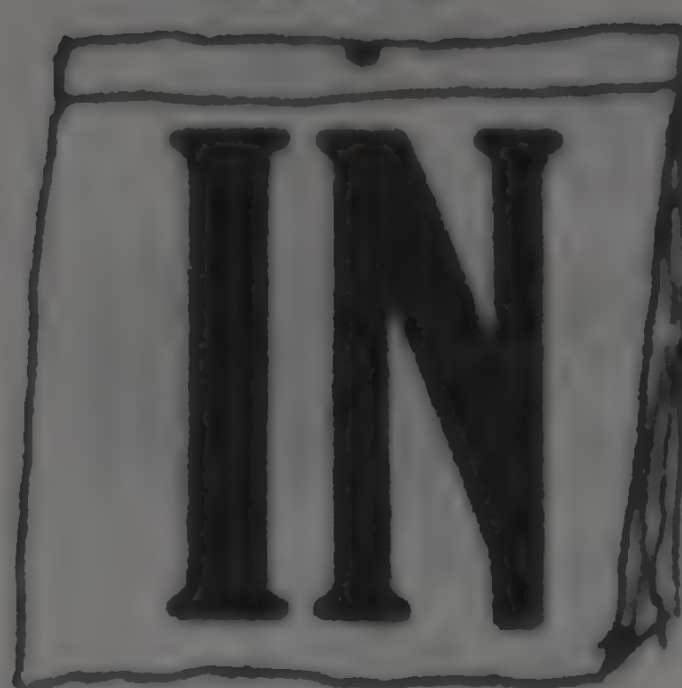
Happy Father's Day!





Photo: David van Dyke

Peter and Marja are



Dear Caller:

You called in reaction to our answer to "Speaking from Experience" (May 10, 1991) who felt that separated and divorced persons should not expect others to understand their difficulties. We told this writer that his approach may help him cope with lack of understanding but it doesn't educate the church. But you *did* try to educate your church, without success.

You were an abused wife who finally left her husband.

You told us that no one contacted you for two months after your separation. Twice you wrote your consistory. Still nothing! You went so far as to mail them a package of educational materials about separation and divorce (you have now sent one to us, too. Thank you!) and you received one perfunctory call back. Six months later, when you finally met with your pastor, he apparently made one remark that really sticks: "Well, you married him."

You feel that you did all the reaching out by calling various church members. This took a lot of courage, yet only one bothered to call you back.

You said that church people don't want to hear about your kind of situation. You found that they had a hard time believing your version of the marriage breakdown because they knew your husband to be a "nice guy."

You mentioned two elders who were understanding. One of them has kept in touch with you. But you feel that your church council as a whole is a cold-hearted bunch.

You told us that you were not asking for much. You didn't want answers or solutions. You just wanted some people to be there for you, to listen to you and to believe you when you said you were afraid.

You concluded your telephone conversation with us by asking: "How do you think I feel on the receiving end of nothing?"

We asked you if we could share your conversation with C.C. readers because it was prompted by a previous column. You agreed, telling us that you wanted to write but it seemed easier to call. Then you surprised us by writing anyway.

Dear P & M:

Thanks for taking the time to talk with me this morning. During our phone call you asked me what I would have wanted the church to do or not do for me. Here are some comments in response to that question.

I did not want to be asked about reconciliation. Questions like "Are you going back?" or "When are you going back?" sent me into hysterics. I had just escaped my prison and I couldn't handle the terrifying thought of being pressured to go back.

I also had difficulty with the pressure to forgive. How on earth can one even think of forgiveness when the wounds are so traumatic? First bind the wounds, then let them heal! Forgiveness comes at the end of the healing process.

People don't realize how difficult it is for a Christian to leave her husband. On top of the common reasons every abused woman has, we also have to deal with the moral and spiritual factors. Leaving a marriage is against our

beliefs since we know that marriage is for life. I have felt so much shame over my decision to leave but I knew I had no choice if I wanted to preserve my sanity.

When people shake their heads in dismay because I'm not able to reconcile and forgive, it only adds to my pain and isolation. I have felt so isolated!

If the church can't back off with its religiosity it will drive abused women away. We need protection, food, shelter, a safe place to heal our wounds, someone who will allow us to express our pain, our shame, our grief, our anger. The church can't solve the problem or give the answers. Neither can the church expect healing to happen in a few weeks. It's a long-term process which works differently for each individual.

Dear Feeling Isolated:

We applaud your efforts to educate and reach out at a time when you could not be expected to have that kind of energy. Obviously you wanted to be understood and you needed to be believed. Desperately!

As an advisory panel we tried to feel our way into the thinking of your church council. Why did they not reach out to you despite your active attempts to elicit their help and compassion? We expect that there were at least two obstacles.

The first is an unrealistic expectation that council members have for themselves. A pastor or an elder often feels the need to know what to say, to give an answer and solve a problem. So what do you say to someone who is not able to hold a conversation about reconciliation and forgiveness!? Notice that the expectation of this ministerial approach emphasizes *speaking*, not the simple healing gift of *listening*.

The other obstacle is a fear of feelings, of being vulnerable. As a wounded person and a woman with deep feelings of pain and grief, you may have been a particularly threatening case for a room full of men. We are convinced that a female presence is badly needed in every council. This will help officebearers approach each pastoral situation with the unique sensitivity that only comes when males and females work things through together in partnership. You are a victim of an abusive husband. But, as a person who sought help and didn't get it, you also appear to be a victim of an insensitive, male-dominated council.

We thank God for your persistence. It has gained you good support from at least one elder. It's not important to be understood by everybody, just by somebody. Thanks to people like you, all of us are learning. That, like your own healing, also seems to be an individual process.

Write to: P & M
c/o Calvinist Contact
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Peter and Marja Silfstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of: Sam De Silva, Ineke Brouwer-Pastoriet, Tom Zeyl, Mirjam Van Til and Bert Wieringa.

Christians suffering in Iraq

Wybo Nicolai

ZAKHO, Iraq (NNI) — As if watching the excitement of a high-tech war from the comfort of one's couch were not enough, television has now brought to the world's living rooms the less than high-tech suffering of the war's aftermath. Seeing Kurdish refugees fleeing into the mountains of northern Iraq and spilling over into the reluctant arms of Iranian and Turkish saviours has mesmerized world attention. What to do about a long-term solution for this displaced people group remains at the forefront of international dialogue.

What has not captured world attention is the plight of Christians travelling among the mostly Muslim Kurds to safety anywhere far from the brutal retaliation of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein and his military machine.

According to one Iraqi refugee, the road from the northern town of Zakho to Turkey was "covered with blood from Christians" suffering from hunger, exhaustion and the effects of highway robbery. Others confirm that not only were Christians victimized by Hussein's troops as they joined in the mass exodus from Iraq, but some Kurds deliberately withheld what little food was being distributed from anyone identified as Christian.

Dr. Tilman Zuerch of the Germany-based Society of Threatened People, reports that as many as 50,000 Iraqi Christians may have taken flight from Iraq.

Paying dearly

According to sources in Turkey, many of those who finally did make it out of Iraq were forced to pay Kurdish smugglers a small fortune to help them cross the Turkish border. While Muslim refugees were charged 600 Iraqi dinar, Christians were charged a much higher fee of 2,000 Iraqi dinar.

Less than five miles inside Iraq's border with Turkey, the city of Zakho, nearly deserted by the mass exodus, has been secured by allied forces as a safe haven for refugees backed up along the mountainous terrain of the Turkish-Iraqi border. In 1987, Zakho's total population numbered around 86,500, most of whom were ethnic Kurds, although there was a substantial Christian minority.

Prior to 1988, Christians lived in their own villages surrounding Zakho, including Upper Sharang, Kanemasi, Bersivi, Fish Khabour and Haurisk. Apart from Bersivi, all these villages have been destroyed in recent years by the Iraqi army in an attempt to force all Kurds and minorities out of the area. The church in Bedar, less than a mile outside of Zakho, has reportedly been

turned into a stable.

Suffering for Christ

Sources report that church life for Christian believers in Zakho prior to the war was extremely difficult. As in neighbouring Turkey, the majority population in this region is Kurdish and mostly Muslim. Whenever believers scheduled a church service, the governing Baath Party had to be informed. As soon as the service ended, several party members, including agents of the notorious *Mukhabarat* or Iraqi secret police, had to provide protection for believers as they left the building. If, for some reason, Iraqi officials were not plainly visible, Kurds were known to attack believers with mud and stones.

But despite Baath Party protection, Christians were not free to worship as they pleased in Zakho. For example, during the service, priests said they felt threatened by the presence of non-believers, often members of the party or the secret police. As such, priests felt obligated to make pro-government statements.

Iraqi refugees stress that the situation for the church in northern Iraq and in the southern cities like Basra is much more difficult than in Baghdad. One Iraqi Christian explained, "Baghdad was the centre of the country, with a lot of foreigners. The regime of Saddam Hussein did not want to have problems here, as they knew the whole world could watch them there. The north and the south were only rarely visited by Westerners. [These areas are populated by] the Kurds and the Shiites, both noted for their hatred of Christians."

Jamal Hashweh, director of the Jordanian Bible Society, says the need for Bibles in Iraq is significant. Few Iraqi Christians outside of Baghdad actually own their own Bibles. Still, Iraqi Christian refugees filtering into Turkey say the greatest need is for biblical literature and Bibles for children. Considering the lack of basic doctrinal knowledge among these believers, this literature will no doubt be useful for the entire family.

How the repopulation of Zakho will affect the Christian church is unclear at this time. The presence of allied troops will no doubt temper some discrimination, particularly that imposed by Iraqi officials and the secret police prior to the March exodus. Nevertheless, some members of the allied forces, quoted by the international press, say that Kurdish leaders initially attempted to exercise limited forms of discrimination against non-Kurds as the masses descended from the mountains to the safety of Zakho and surrounding refugee camps.

Review

Recounting Klaas Schilder's struggles in the church



Klaas Schilder, 1890-1952

Remkes Kooistra

I just finished reading a rather thick book about the Dutch theologian Klaas Schilder. It's called *Schilder's Struggle for the Unity of the Church* by Rudolph van Reest and translated by Theodore Plantinga. I read it with great interest, and with a mixture of joy and sorrow. I knew Professor Schilder quite well, as his student in Kampen, the Netherlands, and also outside of class. I liked him as a teacher, as a person, and also as a preacher. Reading this book brought back many memories about the Reformed Churches of the Netherlands (*Gereformeerde Kerken van Nederland* or GKN).

There are four chapters to this book, apart from the introduction and appendices. The first chapter introduces us to the Schilder period in Holland, when there were strong and growing Reformed churches, and when Christian schools were fully subsidized. Our Reformed people had

arrived. We were in government, university and business. We had more than bread and water: we got used to champagne.

This found its reflection in our theology. We had developed a special grace for believers and a common grace for all the others. We resolved our problems with easy formulas. If sermons lost their cutting edge, well, God's election was beyond our control.

In this situation Schilder pointed us in yet another direction. What it was never became entirely clear. He wrote, "It is better to wait with the 'rounding off' of a closed system, and then 'only' to publish in separate chapters what we have found in the Scriptures." For the sermon this meant no more moralistic preaching through examples, but stress on the history of salvation and the coming kingdom of God. For the rest, there was criticism of the

"inward-outward" scheme. According to Schilder, there is only one covenant, only one faithful church, etc.

Many "enemies"

The second chapter is entitled "Woe to You, My People." It tells of Schilder's early years, roughly 1920-40. After he had served several congregations and written a number of books, he became Professor of Dogmatics in Kampen in 1934. By then he was also the sole editor of the weekly paper *The Reformation*, which became ever more popular under his guidance.

At first Schilder's work was appreciated by almost everyone. But when he began to criticize the situations in the church, many turned against him. He now faced many "enemies" whom he thought he had to fight all the time. A highlight during this period was his first visit to the United States in 1938.

The third chapter deals with the wartime. Before the war he had written against the idols of National Socialism, and he was not silent after the Netherlands became occupied territory. He wrote fiery editorials in *The Reformation*, like the one I remember entitled "Out of the Bombshelter, Get into Your Uniform." He was imprisoned from August to December in 1940.

Schilder remained at work until July 13, 1942. Then the Germans tried to arrest him again, but like many others he went underground.

A time of "liberation"

Synods of the GKN met and tried to resolve the issues around the "threatening deformation." Synodical pronouncements were made in 1942 which Schilder and many others of us did not like. It seemed very difficult to establish any communication between synod and Schilder. This I have never been able to understand. Was he just defiant and recalcitrant, was he hiding behind sophisticated arguments, or did he have good reasons for refusing to cooperate? The sad result was that he was deposed as professor and minister on August 5, 1944.

It came as a surprise that Schilder came out of hiding soon after that. He appeared in person at a meeting in the Hague on August 11 where the "Act of Liberation" was signed by Schilder and others who disagreed with synodical pronouncements and the "Liberated Churches" began their history. Some rejoiced but others wept, agreeing with Dr.

L. Praamsma that Schilder's "Act" was a caricature of what had been written in earlier secessions in 1834 and 1886.

In the fourth chapter the author deals with the time that Schilder served in this new denomination until his untimely death in 1952. During that time Schilder had to fight hard for unity within his own circles. The "liberated" spirit was afraid of "binding" decisions of any synod. There was enough disagreement in the churches to make him wonder whether his church-political insights were conducive to ecclesiastical peace and progress after all.

Shortcomings of the book

In this chapter van Reest gives us a detailed report about Schilder's second American journey of 1947, which failed to establish ties with the Protestant Reformed Church. This is followed up in Plantinga's first Appendix which deals with North American developments, and in the second Appendix which is an article by Schilder, "The Stocking is Finished," with a response by Rev. Herman Hoeksema of the Protestant Reformed Church. Hoeksema says that the two churches were "not knitting a stocking, surely not the stocking of ecclesiastical correspondence." I think the Dutch expression *de kous is af* should be translated "the stocking is abandoned" rather than "the stocking is finished."

Let me conclude with some general remarks.

First, this book is not an historical biography but a eulogy written by one of the many admirers of the late Professor Schilder. The book contains many expressions and statements which are very one-sided.

Second, the composition of the book is sometimes a bit haphazard. For example, we read much about the editorship of *The Reformation*, but we do not get accurate information about the dogmatic controversies; the decisions of 1942 are not mentioned nor explained, and the *vervangingsformule* (alternate formulation) of 1945 is not even mentioned. I wonder whether van Reest, alias Van Spronsen, even knew what the conflict was really about. The very important doctrinal issue seems so small in historical perspective.

Third, the title of the book is amazing. Almost no one thinks of Schilder as a defender of unity. He was much more concerned with purity. I wonder whether it is not too far-fetched for the author to say "if...the watchdogs of the

Good Ecumenical Shepherd Jesus Christ bark loudly against the wolves, they are performing their ecumenical service."

Fourth, although Plantinga's translation is generally excellent, it is not impeccable. For example, on page 196 Schilder supposedly said, "Thank you! Thank you! That's money with the fish." But the Dutch expression is "That's butter with the fish," though butter in this context may refer to money.

Fifth, at times I would have expected a corrective note from the translator. For example, on page 297 we are told, "The disastrous synodical decisions which were intended to destroy the life work of Prof. Schilder..." is merely propaganda and should not have gone unchallenged.

Sixth, and perhaps my most fundamental remark (with which my brothers and sisters of the Canadian Reformed Church might not want to agree) is that van Reest depicts the initial struggle of Schilder in these words, "He spoke and wrote in accordance with the Word and the confessions of the Church — no more, no less." This is merely a naive simplification.

Van Reest suggests that in the 1920s many Reformed people "no longer wanted to accept the confessions," but as he says between brackets, "interpreted them on the basis of their own insights." But how else can anyone interpret them? We all have this tendency in common.

If there can be any ecumenical movement at all, we have to listen to each other and to learn from each other. I think this is something the Christian Reformed Church is trying to do at this time. In Schilder's day things were not as clear-cut as light (Schilder) against darkness (Ridderbos, Berkouwer, Hepp, and many others). In this way the book does not do justice to the historical situation but becomes emotional propaganda.

When you keep this in mind, you can enjoy the book.

Schilder's Struggle for the Unity of the Church, by Rudolph van Reest, translated by Theodore Plantinga. Neerlandia, Alberta: Inheritance Publications, 1990. Softcover, 470 pp., \$29.95.

Remkes Kooistra is a retired pastor and teacher living in Waterloo, Ont.

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If you wish a photo included, send us the original.</p> <p>d) <i>Calvinist Contact</i> will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.</p> <p>e) The rate shown above for classifieds covers any length up to six column inches. <i>Calvinist Contact</i> reserves the right to charge for additional column inches at the rate of \$13.50 per column inch (GST inclusive).</p> <p>NEWLYWEDS</p> <p>Non-subscribing newlyweds whose wedding announcement with their future address appears in <i>Calvinist Contact</i> will receive a letter offering a first-year subscription for only \$20.00 (GST inclusive)! To facilitate matters, we encourage those who request and pay for the wedding announcement to enclose \$20.00 and the couple's future address.</p> <p>Calvinist Contact Publishing Ltd. 4-261 Martindale Rd. St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1 Phone: (416) 682-8311 Fax: (416) 682-8313</p>	<p>HIEMSTRA-BOUWMAN:</p> <p>With thankfulness to God, who instituted marriage, and brings them together, Mr. and Mrs. John Hiemstra would like to announce the forthcoming marriage of their daughter,</p> <p>GERALDINE JOYCE to KENNETH DALE</p> <p>son of Mr. and Mrs. R. Bouwman from Calgary.</p> <p>The Lord willing, this celebration of love will take place on Saturday, June 22, 1991, in the Emmanuel Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. B. Amsing officiating.</p> <p>Their future address: 3002-742 Kingsmere Cres., S.W., Calgary, AB T2V 2H8</p> <p>KODDE-DE RAAF:</p> <p>Mr. and Mrs. Lourens and Wilma Kodde of Granton and Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence and Brenda De Raaf of Belleville are happy to announce the forthcoming marriage of their children,</p> <p>JACQUELINE LYNN and KEVIN PAUL</p> <p>The wedding will take place, D.V., Saturday, June 22, 1991, at 11 a.m. in the Exeter Chr. Ref. Church, Rev. B. DeJonge officiating.</p> <p>Future address: 12750 South Central, Apt. 2S, Crestwood, IL 60445, U.S.A.</p> <p>KWANTES-JANSEN:</p> <p>With joy and thankfulness to the Lord, we, Matt and Dorothy Kwantes and Henry and Jennie Jansen, announce the forthcoming marriage of our children,</p> <p>HEATHER and TIM</p> <p>on Saturday, June 15, 1991.</p> <p>The wedding will take place, the Lord willing, in Trinity Chr. Ref. Church at 1:30 p.m., Rev. Henry Numan officiating.</p> <p>Address: #211 - 2750 Fuller St., Abbotsford, BC V2S 3K1</p>	<p>1926 June 3 1991</p> <p>Andijk, N.H. Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>In quietness but with great thankfulness we remembered the 65th wedding anniversary of our dear mom and dad,</p> <p>JOHN and NELLIE GUETTER</p> <p>We stand in awe to our Lord for what our parents have been for us, and what they are today.</p> <p>"To God be the glory, great things he has done!"</p> <p>We are their thankful children:</p> <p>Chris & Sue Guetter — Clinton, Ont.</p> <p>Peter & Joanne Guetter — Fenwick, Ont.</p> <p>Rita Lazet — Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Jean & John de Jong — Clinton, Ont.</p> <p>Harry & Joan Guetter — Flagstaff, Ariz.</p> <p>Theresa Bakker — London, Ont.</p> <p>Together with 36 grandchildren and 69 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Holland Christian Homes, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p> <p>Clinton Port Hope</p> <p>1956 June 15 1991</p> <p>With joy and praise to God we, the children, are thankful for the 35 years of marriage God has given to our mom and dad, opa and oma,</p> <p>CLARENCE and JENNY HAALSTRA</p> <p>With love from all of us:</p> <p>Michael & Sharon Haalstra — Port Hope</p> <p>Katie, Laura, Olivia</p> <p>Jeanette & Ed Symons — Port Hope</p> <p>Linsey, Haley, Kelsey, Zachary</p> <p>Wilma Haalstra — Toronto</p> <p>Home address: 2 Ward St., Port Hope, ON L1A 1L3</p> <p>Haarlemmermeer Kitchener</p> <p>1951 June 29 1991</p> <p>"They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Is. 40:31).</p> <p>With joy and thanksgiving we announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,</p> <p>JACOB and MARIA KUNTZ (nee Blesheuv)</p> <p>We pray that the Lord will continue to bless you and fill your lives with joy as you begin your retirement together.</p> <p>Mathilda (died, 1981)</p> <p>Evelyn & Syd Hielema</p> <p>Joya, Justin, Adrian</p> <p>Don</p> <p>Open house will be held on Saturday, June 29, 1991, from 2 - 4 p.m. in the Waterloo Chr. Ref. Church, 209 Beringer Rd., Waterloo, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 137 Martinglen Cres., Kitchener, ON N2E 2A3</p> <p>Chatham, Ont. Ayton, Ont.</p> <p>1946 June 21 1991</p> <p>Thankful to our heavenly Father, who sustains them with his care, we hope to celebrate the 45th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,</p> <p>MARINUS and RENA MOL (nee Noordhof)</p> <p>We thank you for the love and care you have bestowed on all of us and pray that God will continue to bless you richly!</p> <p>Congratulations from:</p> <p>Nellie & Bob Lamb — Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Michael, James</p> <p>Susan & Harry Janssen — Bramalea, Ont.</p> <p>David, Jeff</p> <p>Lorraine & Leonard Van Harten — Campbellville, Ont.</p> <p>Anita, Jeannette, Brian, Kathryn</p> <p>Betty & Dick Bouwers — Wingham, Ont.</p> <p>Charlotte, Kim, Karen</p> <p>Janet & Ted Van Lingen — Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Steven</p> <p>Michael & Marja Mol — Brampton, Ont.</p> <p>Brandon, Monique</p> <p>Home address: R.R. #3, Ayton, ON N0G 1C0</p>	 <p><i>Congratulations to Willem and Gerdina Roos on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary!</i></p> <p>Zaandijk, N.H. Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>1951 July 5 1991</p> <p>With joy and thanksgiving to God, we the children of</p> <p>BEREND and MINNIE HORENSMA (nee De Boer)</p> <p>announce the 40th wedding anniversary of our dear parents on July 5, 1991. May our faithful God continue to bless you, Dad and Mom, Opa and Oma!</p> <p>With love and congratulations from:</p> <p>Barry & Clara Horensma — Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Christina, Rosanna, Sarah, Jessica, Gloria</p> <p>Jenny & Brent Westerik — Richmond Hill, Ont.</p> <p>Benjamin</p> <p>Liz and Rob Kraan — Stayner, Ont.</p> <p>Derek, Andrew, Nathan</p> <p>We will host an open house on Saturday, July 13, 1991, from 2 to 4 p.m. at Covenant Chr. Ref. Church, Lansdowne Ave., Woodstock, Ont.</p> <p>Home address: 129 Victoria St. N., Woodstock, ON N4S 6V8</p>	<p>1941 1991</p> <p>Hillegom, Brampton Ont.</p> <p>the Neth. Ont.</p> <p>"This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."</p> <p>It is with joy and in thankfulness to our heavenly Father that we announce the 50th wedding anniversary of our parents and grandparents,</p> <p>WILLEM and GERDINA ROOS</p> <p>on June 25, 1991. We pray that the Lord will continue to guide and bless them, and that he may be a very real comfort to them.</p> <p>With so much love,</p> <p>Bill & Lynda — Bracebridge</p> <p>Bill, Ryan</p> <p>Lynda & Arjan Bult — Peterborough</p> <p>Ian, Robert, Dennis, Michael</p> <p>Audrey & Bill Walsom — Newmarket</p> <p>Jeffrey, Jason</p> <p>We hope to celebrate this occasion at their open house in the Fellowship Hall of Holland Chr. Homes in Brampton on Tuesday, June 25, 1991, from 2-4 p.m.</p> <p>Best wishes very welcome!</p> <p>Home address: Apt. 105, 7900 McLaughlin Rd. S., Brampton, ON L6V 3N2</p>
<p>Thanks</p> <p>DAMSMA:</p> <p>We thank our heavenly Father for giving us 65 years of marriage. We thank our family and friends for a beautiful celebration, for your presents, your cards and your prayers.</p> <p>Peter and Nellie Damsma</p>	 <p><i>Congratulations to Winfred H.J. Bowman on his graduation from the University of Waterloo!</i></p> <p>Thankful to the Lord for his gifts and the opportunity to develop these gifts, we are proud to announce the graduation of</p> <p>WINFRED H. J. BOWMAN</p> <p>from the University of Waterloo with a degree in Mechanical Engineering. He was on the Dean's Honours List for the entire duration of his study program.</p> <p>Winfred, a graduate from Calvin Memorial Christian School, Beacon Christian High School and Laura Secord Secondary School in St. Catharines, Ont., has accepted a position with Westinghouse Canada Inc., Power Generation Division, in Hamilton, Ont.</p> <p>Congratulations from your family and friends and we wish you the Lord's blessing in your future.</p>	<p>Obituaries</p> <p>On June 2, 1991, the Lord took to himself:</p> <p>GERRIT VANDERHILL</p> <p>in his 91st year. We thank God for his love and faith.</p> <p>"One thing I ask of the Lord, this is what I seek: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life" (Ps. 27:4).</p> <p>Beloved husband to Jantje Zylstra.</p> <p>Father and grandfather to:</p> <p>Gerry & Ron Fisher — Whitby</p> <p>Melanie, Tim & Jeanne, Michael & Amy, Christine</p> <p>Robert & Inez — Dorchester</p> <p>Janice, Jason</p> <p>Diane & George Roorda — Tallahassee, Fla.</p> <p>Anthony, Daniel, Cheryl, Douglas</p> <p>Herman & Ina — Lambeth</p> <p>Jennifer, Gary, Amy, Susan</p> <p>Jerry & Linda — Sarnia</p> <p>Shanon, Ryan, Stacey</p> <p>Funeral service was held on June 4, 1991, Rev. L. Van Dellen officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: 43 Clarence St., Strathroy, ON N7G 1H2</p>	<p>Anniversaries</p> <p>With thanksgiving and praise, we joyfully announce the 35th wedding anniversary on June 15, 1991, the Lord willing, of our parents and grandparents,</p> <p>MAX and GÉ HOFSTRA (nee Dykema)</p> <p>Love from:</p> <p>Rob & Barb Abma — Edmonton</p> <p>Scott, Lisa</p> <p>Ted & Shirley VanTienhoven — Airdrie</p> <p>Dawn, Mark, David, Laura, Carrie</p> <p>Andy & Nancy Braak — Rimbey</p> <p>Anthony, Matthew, Amanda</p> <p>John Hofstra — Rimbey</p> <p>Home address: R.R. #1, Rimbey, AB T0C 2J0</p> <p>Obituaries continued on next page....</p>	
<p>Births</p>  <p>REKMAN:</p> <p>With thankful hearts to our Lord, we announce the arrival of three grandsons:</p> <p>STEPHEN JACOB HENRY</p> <p>born April 30, 1991, son of Rick and Carolyn Nienhuis (nee Rekman).</p> <p>NICHOLAS GEORGE</p> <p>born May 12, 1991, son of David and Erie Eizenga (nee Rekman);</p> <p>ROBERT MICHAEL</p> <p>born May 30, 1991, son of Casper and Diana Rekman (nee Werkema).</p> <p>Cas and Mary Rekman</p> <p>1172 Carr St., Sarnia, ON N7S 3A2</p>				

Classified/Events

Obituaries	Personal	For Rent	Events	Events
<p>On June 1, 1991, in his great wisdom our Lord called home our beloved father, grand- and great-grandfather.</p> <p>JACOB FEDDEMA</p> <p>In his 92nd year, of 400 Dominion Street, Strathroy, and formerly of Metcalfe and Warwick Twps., in full confidence in his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.</p> <p>"Happy is he who's help is the God of Jacob, who's hope is in the Lord his God" (ps. 146:5).</p> <p>Predeceased by his wife Frederika Feddema (nee Daling) in November 1962, and a son in 1938.</p> <p>Loving father of:</p> <p>John & Rennie Feddema — Strathroy</p> <p>Jake & Linda Feddema — Watford</p> <p>Frank & Jane Vander Heide — Strathroy</p> <p>Clarence & Greta Huizinga — Petrolia</p> <p>Bob & Ann Wierenga — Innerkip</p> <p>Walter & Effie Feddema — Watford</p> <p>29 grandchildren and 26 great-grandchildren.</p> <p>Funeral service was held in Westmount Chr. Ref. Church, Strathroy, Ont., June 5, 1991, Rev. L.W. Van Dellen and Dr. R. Kooistra officiating.</p> <p>Correspondence address: John P. Feddema, R.R. #2, Strathroy, ON N7G 3H4</p> <p>"Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God" (Is. 41:10).</p> <p>On Saturday, June 1, 1991, our dear husband, father and opa,</p> <p>JACOB HARKES VELEMA</p> <p>went to be with his Lord and Saviour.</p> <p>He will be sadly missed by his wife, Tena Velema-Hazelhoff, Sarnia, Ont., and his children:</p> <p>Joe & Clair Velema — Tottenham, Ont.</p> <p>Robert, Christina, Joanna, Michael, Amanda</p> <p>George & Hennie Velema — Cornwall, Ont.</p> <p>James, Derek, Gerrit</p> <p>Nella and Walter Sandrock — Dundas, Ont.</p> <p>Martina, Christian, Alanna</p> <p>Correspondence address: 1702 Grace St., Sarnia-Clearwater, ON N7S 3P9</p> <p>On Sunday, June 2, 1991, the Lord in his goodness called to his eternal home his child,</p> <p>ANSKE (Andy) VELLENGA</p> <p>of Strathroy, Ont., in his 85th year, having been blessed with 66 years of marriage. Beloved husband of Baukje Vellenga (nee Miedema).</p> <p>Dear father of:</p> <p>Louie Vellenga</p> <p>Tetje Vellenga (Willem deceased)</p> <p>Tina & Bob Veenstra</p> <p>Wilma & Gerald Sampsonius</p> <p>Eva Vellenga</p> <p>Margret & Adrian VanRooyen</p> <p>Ann Vellenga</p> <p>Also survived by 29 grandchildren and 43 great-grandchildren, 4 sisters-in-law and 1 brother-in-law in the Netherlands.</p> <p>"For me to live is Christ and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21).</p> <p>Funeral service was conducted by Rev. Jelle Nutma in East Strathroy. Correspondence address: 400 Dominion St., Apt. #46, Strathroy, ON N7G 3G8</p>	<p>Christian lady (widow), happy personality, outgoing, likes to travel, enjoys home life, located in Ontario, would like to meet Christian gentleman, age 68-75 for companionship and gezelligheid. Write to File #2564, c/o Calvinist Contact, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p> <p>Dutch ambitious Christian young man with charismatic experience, 6' tall, 23 years old, seeks to meet serious young lady with the same desires. Non-smoker, non-drinker please. Send letters to File #2565, c/o Calvinist Contact, 4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1</p> <p>Teachers</p> <p>ABBOTSFORD, B.C.: Abbotsford Christian School's rapidly expanding system (925 students, K-12, 3 campuses) is seeking a full-time and a part-time Elementary French Specialist teacher. Send application, resume and references to: Mr. Henry Contant, Principal, Abbotsford Chr. School, Elementary Campus, Box 175, Abbotsford, B.C. V2S 4N8, or call (604) 859-5167; Fax #859-9995.</p> <p>CAMBRIDGE, Nova Scotia: King's County Chr. School invites applications for one (or possibly two) teaching positions in the lower elementary grades for the 1991-92 school year. We are an inter-denominational school providing a Christ-centred education for our students. Interested people are asked to call Mrs. Erna Vander Heide, R.R. #1, Colbrook Station, King's County, NS B0P 1K0; Phone: (902) 679-5287</p> <p>GEORGETOWN, Ont.: Georgetown District Chr. School. Because of increased enrolment in Kindergarten, we have a possible opening for a 60 per cent teacher aid with E.C.E. training. For information or application please contact Treena Sybersma Principal, R.R. #1, Georgetown, ON L7G 4S4 or phone: (416) 877-4221.</p> <p>HOUSTON, B.C.: Houston Christian School, located in the beautiful Bulkley Valley of north central B.C. has 3 Elementary teaching positions open. Please address all inquiries to Mr. Doyle Smiens, Principal, Box 237, Houston, B.C. Phone (604) 845-7736.</p> <p>SASKATOON, Sask: Saskatoon Christian School (Grades K-8) invites applications for the 1991/92 school year: 1) 1 part-time French teacher (26%); 2) a potential position for a middle years classroom teacher. Interested applicants please forward resume and/or inquiries to: Saskatoon Chr. School, 2410 Haultain Ave., Saskatoon, SK S7J 1R3. Tel.: (306) 343-1494 between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. or after 3:30 p.m.</p> <p>WILLIAMSBURG: Timothy Christian School is looking for a Grade 7/8 part-time teacher (approx. 45%) for September 1991. Please send applications to Principal, Timothy Chr. School, R.R.#1, Williamsburg, ON K0C 2H0, or call (613) 535-2687 (school) or (613) 535-2152 (home).</p>	<p>For rent: 300 acres dairy farm, 250 acres workable, in Central Ontario. 45 tie-stalls with pipeline and cooler. Heifer and veal raising facilities. Available May 1992. Contact (416) 683-0832.</p> <p>LONDON, Ont.: For rent: a finished basement apartment, very clean, for one or two persons. Close to Fanshawe College. Phone: (519) 451-6787.</p> <div> <p>Lowest Car Rental Rates</p> <p>by Lokhorst Holland</p> <p>Schiphol Airport</p> <p>CAMPER RENTALS</p>  <p>• Competitive weekly and monthly rates</p> <p>• Large selection of makes and models</p> <p>Toronto office:</p> <p>(416) 492-5494</p> <p>31 Wagon Trailway Willowdale, ON M2J 4V4</p> </div> <div> <p>Make money the easy way</p>  <p>use the classifieds</p> </div>	<div> <p>WHEN VALUES COLLIDE</p> <p>Christian Action in a Pluralist Society</p> <p>Dr. PAUL MARSHALL</p> <p><i>Keynote Speaker</i></p> <p>Niagara Family Conference</p> <p>Niagara Christian College (near Fort Erie)</p> <p>August 2-5, 1991</p> <p>Workshop Leaders:</p> <p>Don Posterski, Ross Maracle</p> <p>Christel Vonk-Zeyl, Diane Marshall,</p> <p>Gerald Vandezande, Ed Vanderkloet, Timothy Ernst,</p> <p>Bing Goei, Harry Kits, Tim Schouls,</p> <p>Joe Abbey-Colborne</p> <p>ICS Institute for Christian Studies</p> <p>229 College Street, Toronto, Ontario</p> <p>M5T 1R4/Telephone: (416) 979-2331</p> </div> <div> <p>FRISIAN PICNIC</p> <p>on Monday, July 1, 1991, starting at 11 a.m. at Pinehurst Conservation Park in Paris, Ont., Hwy. 24A</p> <p><i>Fun for everyone!!</i></p> </div> <div> <p>ATTENTION:</p> <p>If you are considering sending us an ad via fax, please be sure to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. send printed or typed copy 2. include billing address 3. include contact person with phone number </div>	<div> <p>Help Wanted</p> <p>SEEKING A PASTOR</p> <p>The Christian Reformed Church of St. Albert, Alta., a congregation of 60 families, will be vacant at the end of June 1991. We are seeking a new pastor to lead us in worship and congregational life. A church profile is available upon request.</p> <p>For information contact:</p> <p>Bud Brink (403) 458-3091, or</p> <p>Albert Stol</p> <p>57 Springfield Cr.</p> <p>St. Albert, AB T8N 0J9</p> <p>Phone: (403) 458-6578</p> </div> <div> <p>Help Wanted</p> <p>Seeking mature woman to provide loving care for two primary-aged children and one toddler in our home. Some flexibility required; approx. 36 hours per week. Summers off if desired. Non-smoker. Grimsby - walk to town area. Commencing September 1991. Please respond to: J. Duncan, 15 Murray St., Grimsby, ON L3M 3N6</p> </div>
	<p>Happy Father's Day!</p>			



The Lighthouse Community Centre (Christian Reformed Inner City Ministry)

is seeking applications for a

Neighbourhood Services Development Coordinator

Whose responsibility would be to:

- coordinate existing food bank and used-clothing services
- develop new related outreach programs: life-skills training and self-help groups, counselling and other follow-up programs
- recruit, train and supervise volunteers.

To be part of our team, this person must have a living commitment to Jesus Christ and a desire to share this faith in a multi-cultural, Word & Deed ministry. A Social Work degree, fluency in English and Spanish or Portuguese, and experience in organizing programs are also requirements.

To apply, please submit your resume and salary expectations to:

A. Vandenberg, The Lighthouse
1008 Bathurst Street, Toronto, ON M5R 3G7

Events

All former Students, Staff, & Supporters
are cordially invited to join us in celebrating
the 25th Anniversary of the
Ottawa Christian School
on October 12 & 13, 1991
Ottawa, Ontario

Contact the school for more information at 2191 Benjamin Ave.,
Ottawa K2A 1P6 or call 1-613-722-5836

Happiness

To show a child what has once delighted you, to find the
child's delight added to your own, so that there is now a double
delight seen in the glow of trust and affection, this is happiness.

--J.B. Priesley

To all Calvinist Contact subscribers and
advertisers:
Only FIVE issues will be published
during July and August:
July 12, 26 and Aug. 16, 23, 30.

The Calvinist Contact office will be closed for vacation from
July 22 through August 5. Our office will re-open Tuesday,
August 6.

ADVERTISING DEADLINES ARE AS FOLLOWS:

Issue dated:	Advertising deadline (4 p.m.):
July 12	July 3
July 26	July 10 (NOTE!!)
Aug. 16	Aug. 7
Aug. 23	Aug. 14
Aug. 30	Aug. 21

Calvinist Contact will not publish: July 5, 19 and Aug. 2, 9.
Your co-operation is appreciated. We wish you all a
relaxing holiday.

Stan de Jong
Manager

Weekly puzzle by Don Johnson

ACROSS

1 A Fonda
6 Nautical term
10 Georgia —
14 MN town
15 Junction line
16 Dies —
17 Orchestral
group
20 Certain marble
21 Entrances
22 Fender bender
23 Timetable abbr.
25 Look at
26 Fireplace shelf
29 — Moines
30 Church part
32 Salmagundi
34 Located forward
38 Part of Lesser
Antilles
42 Made beloved
43 RBI e.g.
44 War god
45 So, that's it!
48 Columbus
school letters
49 Guitarist Paul
52 Perched
53 Boring routines
55 Fighting area
57 Baltic land
61 Mitchell's
masterpiece
65 Ferber or Millay
66 Server
67 Logic
68 Gather
69 Thin Man's dog
70 Captures

DOWN

1 Church seats
2 Make revisions
3 Antler point
4 Ceased
5 Scolded
6 Property
7 Allow
8 Cup handle
9 Flightless bird
10 Knotted
11 Banks
12 Spiteful
13 Author of
"Steppenwolf"
18 Diamond group

19 Phenomenon
23 Years: Lat.
24 Deserters
26 Sewing machine
inventor
27 TV's Ken
28 Lash
31 Time periods
33 Concert halls
34 Put two and two
together
35 Division word
36 Harem rooms
37 Alphabet-run
39 City on the
Vistula
40 Location
41 Sleep
45 Singer
Franklin
46 Keep quiet
47 Affirm to be
correct
49 Beer
50 Eat away
51 Medicinal plant
54 Farmer at times

56 — tide
58 Columbus' ship
59 Detective, abbr.
60 Summer drinks

62 — Lupino
63 "My country, —
of thee..."
64 Before DDE

Calendar of Events

June 15	RCBPO Hamilton Halton Chapter meets at 7:45 p.m. at the Ebenezer Can. Ref. Church. Speaker: Clarence Boonstra. For info. call (416) 524-1203.	June 26	Annual picnic of "The Cypress Gardens Winter Ministry," at 10 a.m., Bronte Creek Provincial Park (take exit 109 off QEW). Bring lunch!
June 15	The "Wapenbroeders" — "Dutch Canadian Legion" — have their Annual Meeting in the Seniors Hall in Alberton , Alberton Side Rd. Starts 10:00 a.m. For information call: Bert Verwey, 416-522-2376.	July 1	Frisian picnic starting at 11 a.m. at Pinehurst Conservation Park in Paris , Ont. Hwy. 24A. Fun for everyone!!
June 15	Heather & Helen in concert, 7:30 p.m., Calvin CRC, Ottawa , Ont. Admission at the door (portion of proceeds to CRWRC).	July 3	"De Hollandse Dag in Mount Brydges," at 10 a.m., Caradoc Community Centre, Mount Brydges , Ont. Speaker: Rev. J. Joosse. Bring lunch!
June 15	"Grunneger Picnic," at 10 a.m., Grand River Conservation Area, Rockwood , Ont.	July 5-6	"The People and the Book: Christian Origins and the N.T.," a conference at ICS, Toronto , Ont. Speaker NT scholar N. Thomas Wright of Oxford University. For registration call (416) 979-2331.
June 19	RCBPO Fifth Annual All-Ontario Golf Tournament. For info. call (416) 524-1203.	July 7	Dutch service at the CRC, Ancaster , Ont., 3 p.m., led by Rev. J. Kuntz.
June 20	CFPO Provincial Board meets at Hillcrest United Church, Hornby , Ont. (Trafalgar Rd., just north of Hwy. 401).	July 12-14	40th Anniversary CRC, Wallaceburg , Ont. For dinner tickets and info. call (519) 677-4479.
June 21-22	"Rumours of Glory: Bruce Cockburn & Christian Faith in a post-modern world." At ICS, Toronto , Ont. This seminar will be led by J. Richard Middleton and Brian J. Walsh. For registration call (416) 979-2331.	July 25	"The Ambassadors" in concert at the celebratory 25th anniversary of the Iroquois Council of the Calvinist Cadet Corps. At 8 p.m., War Memorial Hall, University of Guelph, Guelph , Ont. Admission \$5 per person. Everyone welcome!
June 22	"Celebration of Service." Closing ceremony for Toronto Central Christian School, 7:30 p.m., Forward Baptist Church, Toronto , Ont. For info. call Dian Hofstra at (416) 443-0064.	Aug. 2-5	"When Values Collide," theme of the ICS Niagara Family Conference, at Niagara Christian College, Fort Erie , Ont. Keynote speaker: Dr. Paul Marshall. Many excellent workshop leaders. For info. and registration call (416) 979-2331.
June 23	City-wide hymn-sing, 8 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia , Ont.		

Calvinist Contact
Don't leave your
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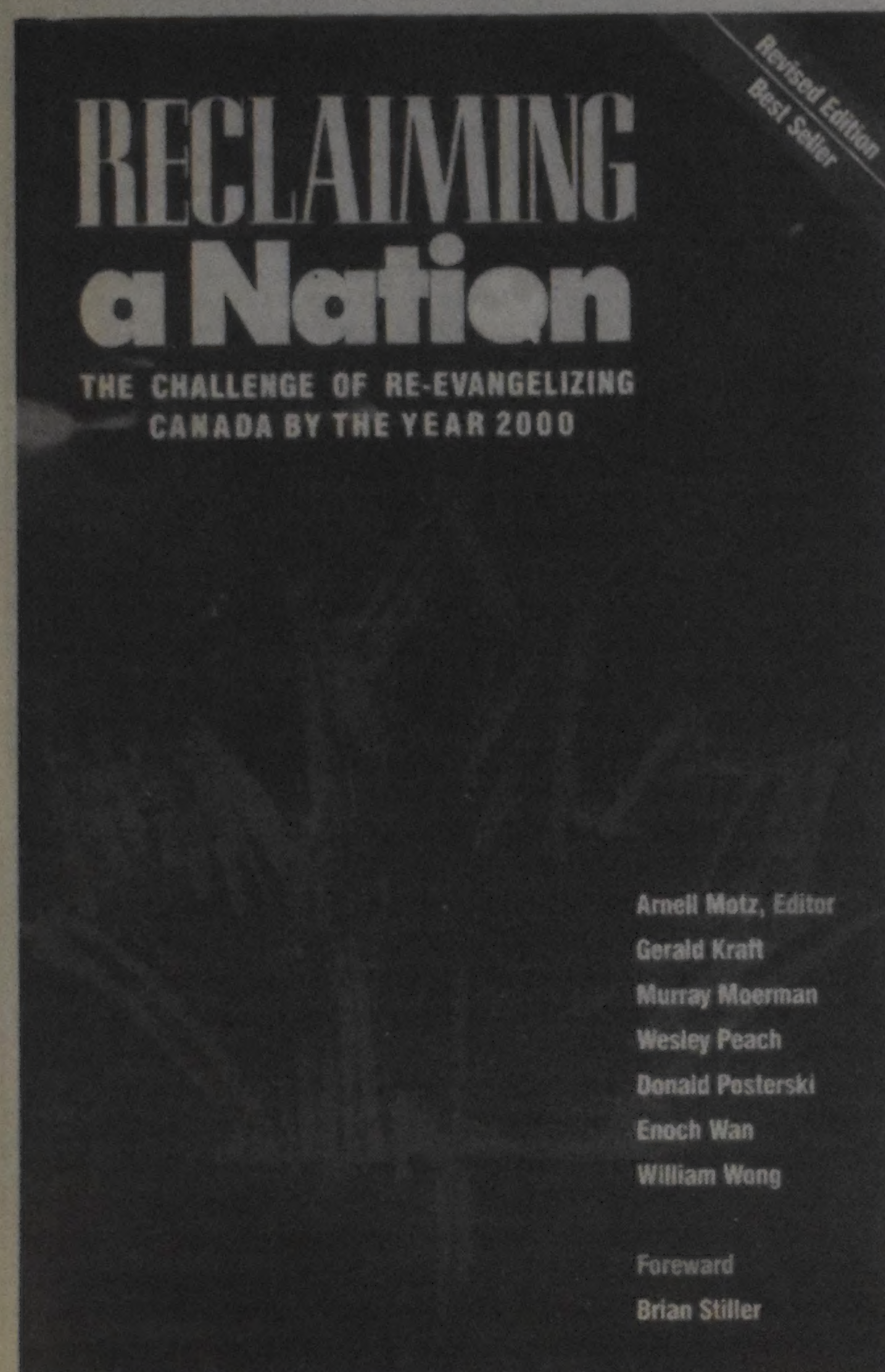
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Books

Robert VanderVennen, book review editor

Christian witness

To become an outward-looking church



Reclaiming a Nation: The challenge of re-evangelizing Canada by the year 2000, edited by Arnell Motz. Richmond, B.C. V7A 4X9: Church Leadership Library, 2nd ed., September 1990. ISBN 0-9694564-1-7. Softcover, 280 pages, \$11.95. Reviewed by Robert VanderVennen.

Get the picture: here's a congregation that serves the needs of its own members, looking inward, stable in numbers of members, fretting about the health of the denomination. Around them they're aware that Canada is becoming more secular, that other churches are losing members, that the nation is becoming less and less Christian. The world is changing, but they are not much noticing.

But some people are indeed noticing, such as the authors of this book. And they're giving us a wake-up call.

I was wrong about this book. I figured it was just another hyper plan to make everybody in Canada a Christian by the year 2000. It's much more than that, and we definitely need to consider its contents carefully.

True, this book was not written by Dutch Calvinists. We have our own numbers plan for growth by the year 2000. This is a bigger plan, one for the whole nation.

Nation building, they say, is a religious rather than a political matter. We need to call Canada and its people back

to God. How does evangelism get beyond the "circulation of the saints," as Reginald Bibby put it? Let's face it, even evangelistic churches are doing a lousy job of evangelizing.

Facing the facts

So Brian Stiller and Don Posterski and others set up Vision 2000 to face the facts and do something about them. They've done lots of sociological-type research about churches and evangelism. Tables, charts and graphs abound. Looks like we have here a sociologist's dream about evangelism. But there is a solidness, a no-nonsense character to the result.

Arnell Motz pictures the condition of the Canadian church, pie charts and all, followed by a chapter on who's growing and who's not. Ups and downs. Not an encouraging picture. About 7.6 per cent of Canada is evangelical Christian they say.

Then there's future trends, aging population, non-European immigrants and all. Church planting in areas not now served by evangelical churches is one need. Especially in places like Toronto and Montreal where there are too few evangelical churches. The book contains a whole case-study model showing how it can be done.

Evangelism among ethnic immigrant groups is important. Foreign missions has moved to our neighbourhood. Churches should hold

English language classes.

Friendship is the key

Who responds to the Gospel and why? There's a big chapter on this, complete with questionnaire data and discussion by the Vision 2000 team. Big crusades are in the past tense, unless you can get Billy Graham; and you can forget TV evangelism. Not many people are converted after hearing the Gospel for the first time. It takes several presentations, in different circumstances. People are most receptive at major turning points in their lives, and the witness of a family member or a friend is crucially important. Remember that — personal friendship is the key. Often the decisive moment comes when the person is alone.

A splendid chapter deals only with Quebec. Again a survey, this time of 7350 members of evangelical churches. The pattern is a bit different from English Canada, and well worth reading.

How are churches actually doing evangelism? Poorly, mostly. The pastor must carry and convey the vision, and it helps if the pastor is gifted in drawing people into the church. Most effective is evangelism by personal word-of-mouth. Next comes home Bible studies, then counselling, then church programs. Friendship evangelism is the key. Each congregation must have its evangelization plan.

How can you reach people? First listen to them. The authors recommend, naturally, a "needs survey" of the neighbourhood. Find out where people are hurting, where they are changing, because then you find them most open to the Gospel. The book has a sample questionnaire for a local survey of needs, and it identifies possible Christian responses to the hurts and stresses of people.

But more than that is the need of Christians communally to "bind up the wounds" of people in the name of Christ, who was known as a physician. Problems are identified and possible Christian responses suggested. Here's where all the gifts of God's people are needed, even those who are tongue-tied. Evangelism is an every-believer matter.

I'm excited about this book. Every church should have a copy, for starters, and should discuss it and be mobilized to move in the direction it suggests. Everyone in the church is needed in the areas where one is gifted, and training is essential in a variety of directions. It would be marvellous to see churches turned on fire by the full-orbed witnessing this book calls for.



Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

When God let's us down (IV)

"Why, O Lord, do you reject me and hide your face from me? ... The darkness is my closest friend" (Psalm 88:14, 18).

The questions we've asked of ourselves during the past weeks are these: "How large is my world?" and "How rich is my spirit?" When life caves in on us and we feel as if God has let us down, here's a third question we need to reflect on: "How long is my view?"

Hurt is always the sharpest at the instant it happens. The Bible says that a woman who has given birth can't remember the excesses of her labour pains. I had a terrible spill with my best friend's 10-speed bike as a teen, but there's no way I can call to mind now the intensity of the agony that shot through me in those moments.

Keeping the pain alive

Betrayal is the same for us. The only way we can keep the pain alive is to replay the moment of agony over and over again in our minds.

Sometimes, perhaps, we need to do that. Eli Wiesel, the Jewish novelist, replays again and again the horror of the Holocaust in nearly every book he pens. He *means* for his writings to hurt. He *wants* to keep the pain alive.

But sometimes we do that to our own hurt. Isn't our circumstance of life already enough to get us down? Don't we already know in our own hearts how great our agony is? Shall we cling to it, and play it time and again like Psalm 88 stuck in repeat mode?

Is this the *only* song we should sing? Are there not *other* psalms as well? Don't we need the variety of the rest of the Bible?

If we can begin to sing other songs of our faith as well, this is what we'll find: the beginning of healing.

I've told you before about Helen Steiner Rice, whose plans for a law degree at Ohio Wesleyan College were thwarted by the flu epidemic of 1918 which killed her father.

Instead of getting an education, for a decade Helen worked at an electrical utility company to support herself and her mother. When she married Franklin Rice, a dashing entrepreneur, in 1928 she thought her future was secure.

But the next year the stock market crashed, the world financial system collapsed, and the banking industry fell apart. Franklin couldn't take the pressure; he committed suicide.

How do you read Helen's life now? A deceased father. A lost career. A vanished fortune. A dead husband. A lonely existence.

Where is God when it hurts? What would become of Helen?

Another perspective

Most of you know what *did* become of her. Because Helen eventually got a job working for Gibson Greeting Card company. And one day she tried her hand at the little verses she was editing. And over the years, Helen Steiner Rice became the folk-poet who spoke the language of thousands of Christians across North America and worldwide.

Some years ago she was asked about her favourite poem. She couldn't tell, she said, which was her best. But she did know which one meant the most to her. It was this one:

*So together we stand at life's crossroads
And view what we think is the end
But God has a much bigger vision
And he tells us it's only a bend.*

*For the road goes on and is smoother,
And the pause in the song is a rest.
And the part that's unsung and unfinished
Is the sweetest and richest and best.*

*So rest and relax and grow stronger.
Let go and let God share your load.
Your work is not finished or ended;
You've just come to a bend in the road.*

Are you in pain today? Has God betrayed you? Do you sing Psalm 88 with gusto? Then pause with Helen Steiner Rice for a moment and ask yourself: "How long is my view?" Your soul needs to know.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church in London, Ont.